This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

45. 909.

The Church, the Witness and Preserver of the Truth.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN

THE HOLY TRINITY CHAPEL,

BORDESLEY, BIRMINGHAM,

ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 23RD.,

1845,

BEING THE

Twenty-second Anniversary of the Consecration of the Chapel.

BY THE REV. GEORGE CAREY, B.A.,

OF QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON: FRANCIS AND JOHN RIVINGTON,

St. Paul's Church Yard and Waterloo Place.

H. C. LANGBRIDGE, AND B. HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

MDCCCXLV.

WILLIAM HODGETTS, PRINTER, CANNON-STREET.

BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

PREFACE.

THE following Sermon was not prepared with any view to publication, and it now appears only in compliance with the repeated wish of several who heard it, and under circumstances which did not seem to admit of refusal. It would have appeared earlier, but for reasons which it is not necessary to mention. I have to acknowledge that my thanks are due to the REV. J. OLDKNOW, Incumbent of the Chapel, for his kindly undertaking the correction of the press.

HIMLEY, LENT, 1845.

SERMON.

1. Tim. iii. 15.

"THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH."

ANY body who does but think upon the world and its concerns, must at once be impressed with the changing, uncertain nature of its connexions, institutions, and pursuits. Whether man be considered individually, connectedly as in a family, or collectively as a nation, still the same unalterable law pervades and holds sway, both over himself and over whatever issues from his hand. In all things human we observe the operation of the sentence passed upon man at the fall; all his natural aims and successes do but tend to dissolution and death. Empires which were the fruits of his united wisdom and strength, and in their turns presided over the earth, have faded away, and a representation of them is no longer to be found.

Such are the facts which the world's history presents; but in the history of the Church of God, we trace the operation of a different law. In that we contemplate a kingdom which cannot pass away or be removed; in that we behold the law of the Spirit of Life, sustaining man amid his infirmities, raising him above all that is perishable and earthly, influencing and guiding his actions, elevating his aims, and imprinting on his character the stamp of immortality. In this kingdom

45. 909.

of the stone cut out without hands, smiting the idols of the world, breaking them in pieces, scattering them like chaff, and filling the earth in their stead.

And now, to this day, the government which Apostles set up endures, and is here among ourselves, and we are its subjects. "Through all changes of "civil affairs, of race, of language, and opinion," through the convulsion of empires, and revolutions of kingdoms,—"the succession of rulers then begun, has "lasted on," in the persons of the Bishops who still represent, in every country, the original founders of the Church—the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely we must perceive, in all this, the fulfilment of the word which He spake when He sent them forth in His name, "to make disciples of, and to baptize "all nations," promising "to be with them always, "even to the end of the world." How can we refer it to any other? "For there is in it something so "unearthly, something which from its marvellousness "we are forced to ascribe to Him, something which, "from its dignity and greatness, bespeaks His hand." Surely, in the contemplation of these, His wonderful works, we may take up the language of the Saints in the Apocalypse, "Great and marvellous are Thy "works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are Thy "ways, Thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear "Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?"

It has thus, my Brethren, been my endeavour to sketch out the rise, progress, and establishment of the society or body to which we belong, and which, in our text, has the name of the Church of the living God,—which was instituted and ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ, to be as a pillar upon a basis to support and perpetuate, which has supported and perpetuated, which still upholds and continues in our day, and

which will hand on for ever, that system and truth which Apostles received from Christ, and went forth preaching, for the salvation of the world.

Now it is necessary, and of the last importance, that every one of us should be assured of what the Faith really is, that we may commit it to our hearts, and make it the foundation of a Christian life, and then hand it over to our posterity for the same end. Moreover, Holy Scripture itself declares that "there "must be heresies, that they which are approved may "be made manifest;"[4] and again, that there are those "who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruc- "tion,"[5] and further enjoins that every one should "withdraw himself from every brother that walketh "disorderly, and not according to the Apostolic tra- "dition,"[6] which must necessarily include Apostolic Faith. If we could not certainly learn what that tradition is, we should be in danger, if we aim at obedience to the Apostle's precept, of separating ourselves from God's Truth, and so, by our example and influence, hinder its progress in the world; and moreover, incur the guilt of corrupting the word of God, for in effect it may be corrupted by the "imposition of a wrong "sense, as well as by actual change of the text."[7] It is true, indeed, that "Holy Scripture containeth all "things necessary to Salvation, so that whatsoever is "not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not "to be required of any man, that it should be believed "as an article of *the* Faith, or be thought requisite "or necessary to salvation;" yet men cavil and dispute about what the teaching of Scripture is. We are surrounded by a multitude of parties and sects, who all agree in holding Scripture to be the foundation of their belief,

[4] 1 Cor. xi. 19. [5] 2 Pet. iii. 16.
[6] 2 Thess. iii. 6. [7] Tert. de Prescrip.

and it is notorious that the belief of each of them, is more or less different from that of the other, while that of some, is the very opposite of the rest. Now it must be certain and clear to any body, who seriously considers it, that Scripture cannot bear such a variety of interpretations, for it is the nature of Truth to be one and undivided.

Notwithstanding all this difference and conflict of opinion, we have not, blessed be God, any difficulty in learning what the Faith really is, which Apostles received from Christ, and delivered over to their successors to keep; for it has been brought down and handed on from age to age, by that body which the power of God has kept and maintained.[8] It is not to

[8] What is here doctrinally maintained, is a fact which may be historically proved by any body who has ability and leisure. The following impressive passage, in the Bampton Lectures of Dr. Van Mildert, late Bishop of Durham, speaks to the point. "If a candid investigation be made of the points generally "agreed upon by the Church Universal, it will probably be "found, that at no period of its history has any *fundamental* "or *essential* truth of the Gospel been *authoritatively* dis- "owned. Particular Churches may have added many super- "stitious observances, and many erroneous tenets, to these "essential truths: and in every Church particular individu- "als, or congregations of individuals, may have tainted large "portions of the Christian community with pestilential here- "sies. But as far as the Church Catholic can be deemed "reponsible, the substance of sound doctrine still remains un- "destroyed at least, if not unimpaired. Let us take, for "instance, those Articles of Faith which have already been "shown to be *essential* to the Christian Covenant:—the Doc- "trines of the Trinity, of our Lord's Divinity and Incarnation, "of His Atonement and Intercession, of our Sanctification by "the Holy Spirit, of the terms of acceptance, and the ordinan- "ces of the Christian Sacraments and Priesthood.

"At what period of the Church have these doctrines, or "either of them, been by any public act disowned, or called "*in question*? We are speaking now, it will be recollected,

be sought for in the writings of the Fathers, as is commonly said, though they all bear witness to it; nor is there so little agreement about it, that we cannot be sure where it resides, as is urged by others. St. Paul speaks of Timothy's being "nourished up in the

"of what in the language of Ecclesiastical History is emphatically called THE CHURCH; that, which has from age to age borne rule, upon the ground of its pretensions to Apostolical Succession. And to this our enquiry is necessarily restricted. ..... But view now, on the other hand, the labours of those who endeavoured to subvert any of these fundamental truths. Observe the parties with whom they originated, and the estimation in which they were holden. No age of the Church has ever been entirely free from attempts to spread pernicious errors. Yet at what period have they ever received its authoritative sanction? Did the Church in primitive times yield one iota of essential doctrine to the Gnostic Heretics? Did it afterwards adopt either the Sabellian, the Arian, or the Macedonian tenets? Did the wild enthusiasm of Manes or Montanus, and their followers, in any respect influence its Creed? And in later times, when and where have the Socinian notions been recognized by any legitimate authority? Or, what proof can even the disciples of Calvin produce, that his doctrine of arbitrary and irrespective decrees was ever the received persuasion of the Catholic Church? To say nothing of the multitude of lesser divisions of religious opinion; or of those ephemeral productions, of each of which, as of their authors it might be said, 'in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in 'the evening it is cut down and withereth.' Surely here is something to arrest attention; something to awaken reflection; something which they who sincerely profess Christianity, and are tenacious of the inviolability of its doctrines, must contemplate with sentiments of awe and veneration. ..... How have they withstood the assaults of continued opponents? opponents wanting neither talents nor inclination to effect their overthrow? If these considerations be deemed insufficient, let the adversary point out by what surer tokens we shall discover any Christian community, duly answering the Apostle's description, that it is 'built upon 'the foundation *of the Apostles* and Prophets, Jesus Christ '*Himself being the chief* Corner Stone.'"

" words of Faith," and elsewhere charges him, " keep " that which is committed to thy trust," literally, " keep the deposit;" and, in another place, that he should " hold fast the form of sound words;" and further instruction is given him concerning the things which he had heard from St. Paul, " before many " witnesses," that is, as it would appear, at a kind of public charge at his ordination :—these he is directed to " commit to faithful men, who shall be able to " teach others also."[9] He is enjoined to put others in charge of a definite trust, and, as their office was to teach, it was to serve as a test of the doctrine they were to deliver. St. Peter, also, in writing to the Christians of the East, speaks of " stirring up their " minds by way of remembrance of the *commandment* " of the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour," which must point to a definite summary of belief and duty, put into their hands on their becoming obedient to the Gospel.

In these passages, and many more might be produced, clear and evident reference is made to the truths which we know the Apostles taught dogmatically ; but nowhere in the New Testament are they summed up and exhibited together, nowhere systematically stated. Nor, perhaps, was it to be expected that they should be ; for the various portions of which it is composed were, without exception, addressed to persons already instructed, already put in possession of the great body of Christian Truth, by the Sacrament of Regeneration : they are addressed to those who *had been* " called to be Saints,"—" elected unto life,"— " called to the possession of like precious faith." St. Luke wrote his Gospel to Theophilus, that he " might " know the certainty of those things wherein *he had* " *been* instructed."

[9] *2 Tim. ii. 2.*

But if the Apostles did not themselves commit to writing the great outlines of their teaching, or if, during their lifetime, they were not put on record at all, yet very soon after they had been taken to their rest, men, full of faith and charity, who had companied with them, and had washed their feet, and heard the word from their mouth, drew up and brought together the chief articles of Faith, the great heads of doctrine, which they delivered, and required to be professed by persons who, in baptism, put on Christ. So originated the formulary called *the Apostles' Creed*,[10] which came to be acknowledged in all the Church throughout the world, as the undoubted summary of the great truths which Apostles taught. It might vary, indeed, in form of expression, in different parts of the Church, as various persons may differ in bearing testimony to the same fact, but everywhere the substance was the same. And, in process of time, when those who had departed from the Faith sought to misinterpret and explain away its meaning, the Church met in Council, and gave fuller impression to its various articles, in the Creed of Nicæa or Constantinople, as it stands in our Communion Service. Further still, we are in possession of other very precious and sacred documents,—I mean the Offices and Liturgies of the Church; the latter almost bearing the impress of Apostolic hands. These we may regard as the commentary, exposition, and developement of the spirit and character of Apostolic doctrine, setting forth the desires it suggests, and which we should cherish, the aspirations it encourages, the duties it enforces, and the obedience which it enjoins.

Such are the precious gifts and excellent things stored up for us in the Church of God, so that, in the

[10] King's *Hist. of the Apostles'* Creed, c. i. p 34.—44. *Bingham's Antiq. bk. xi. c. vii.* § viii.

words of one of old, "we ought not to be still seeking "among others for the truth, which it is easy to "receive from the Church; since therein, as in a rich "depository, the Apostles most abundantly lodged all "things appertaining to the truth: so that whoever "is willing, may receive from her the waters of life. "For the Church is the entrance to life: all the rest "are but thieves and robbers."[11]

In thus maintaining the Church's office, as the sole guardian, witness, and dispenser of the Faith, we may seem to many, to be speaking something new, and our name may be cast out as bigoted and obstinate, as illiberal and uncharitable, as narrowing the bounds of Salvation, and thwarting religious unity. Our answer is, we have no power over ourselves, and, as we must not be tempted to be careless of our trust for the sake of a good name among men, so we must not draw back, because our firmness would provoke their wrath and opposition.

The presence of our Master besets us behind and before, and from Him we learn that "no strange "thing happens to us." It was the lot of His Apostles to be "persecuted from city to city," and to have His mark upon them,—worldly reproach. But they were to "possess their souls in patience," knowing that for His name's sake they endured it, and that their work

[11] S. Iren. adv. Hær. iii. 4. S. Irenæus was Bp. of Lyons about A. D. 200, and was companion of S. Polycarp, the disciple of S. John. In connexion with the above passage, he goes on to quote the substance of the Apostles' Creed as the Rule of Faith. Tertullian, Presbyter of Carthage about the same time, does the same, and in almost the same words, in his Treatise de Prescrip. Hæret. § 13. and in other places of his works. Indeed it was so quoted by the Fathers generally. See Bingham's Antiq. bk. xvi. c. i. § 1, and note to Oxf. Translation of Tertullian, vol. i. p. 446.

was not their own, but His. And it affords somewhat of relief and consolation to those who have to bear their share in our present troubles and perplexities, to meet with the words of one who was valued and honoured in his generation, who foresaw what would happen in the restoration of the distinctive and long obscured dotrines of Church communion, and who, "with "that prescience given to aged piety when about to "depart from this world, delineated in outline strangely "faithful, the very form and order of things which "were to be after his departure, but of which there "were yet no signs." "I seem to think I can tell "you something," he observed to whom he addressed it, "which you, who are young, may probably live to "see, but which I, who shall soon be called away off "the stage, shall not. Wherever I go, all about the "country, I see amongst the Clergy a number of very "amiable and estimable men, many of them much in "earnest, and wishing to do good. But I have ob- "served one universal want in their teaching: the "uniform suppression of one great truth. There is no "account given any where, so far as I see, of the One "Holy Catholic Church. I think that the causes of "this suppression have been mainly two. The Church "has been kept out of sight, partly in consequence of "the civil establishment of the branch of it which is "in this country, and partly out of false charity to "dissent. Now this great truth is an Article of the "Creed; and if so, to teach the rest of the Creed to "its exclusion, must be to destroy 'the analogy or "proportion of the Faith.' This cannot be done "without the most ruinous consequences. The doc- "trine is of the last and greatest importance; and "the principles it involves of immense power; and "some day, not far distant, it will judicially have its

" reprisals. And, whereas, the other Articles of the " Creed, seem now to have thrown it into the shade, it " will seem, when it is brought forward, to swallow " up the rest. We now hear not a breath about the " Church; by and bye, those who live to see it, will " hear of nothing else; and just in proportion, perhaps, " to its present suppression, will be its future develope- " ment. Our confusion, now-a-days, is chiefly owing " to the want of it; and there will be yet more con- " fusion attending its revival. The effects of it I even " dread to contemplate, especially if it come suddenly. " And woe betide those, whoever they are, who shall, " in the course of Providence, have to bring it forward. " It ought, especially of all others, to be a matter of " catechetical teaching and training. The doctrine " of the Church Catholic, and the principles of Church- " membership cannot be explained from pulpits; and " those who have to explain it, will hardly know " where they are, or which way they are to turn them- " selves; they will be endlessly misunderstood and " misinterpreted. There will be one great outcry of " Popery from one end of the country to the other. " It will be thrust upon minds unprepared, and on " an uncatechised Church. Some will take it up " and admire it as a beautiful picture; others will be " frightened and run away, and reject it; and all will " want a guidance, which one hardly knows where " they will find. How the doctrine may be first " thrown forward we know not; but the powers of " the world may any day turn their backs upon us, " and this will probably lead to those effects I have " described."[12]

[12] Declaration of the Rev. J. Sikes of Guilsborough, quoted in Dr. Pusey's Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.—The following passage from the dissertation on the Council of Car-

If the present position of things is so natural a consequence of previous forgetfulness of a great portion

thage, contained in the Translation of S. Cyprian's Works, published 1717, by the Rev. N. Marshall, Chaplain in Ordinary to King George I. may be here quoted. Speaking of the readiness with which Dissenters were received, on coming over to the Church, he says : " Meanwhile it will perhaps deserve the consideration of those who are entrusted with the care and regimen of Christ's flock ; whether the too great easiness and indulgence, which have been used in receiving such as come over to it, (the Church) may not have contributed to their indifference, whether they came, or no. If they who are already in it, seem not to value their privilege nor to lay any stress upon it ; it may be naturally thought, by those who are out of it, that there is no great matter thereupon depending. Whilst they, who should most insist upon the importance of Church-communion, are negligent in pressing it ; others, who have not thought of it, will be equally negligent in complying with it. The notion seems, indeed, quite lost or forgotten ; and we are come, by degrees, so tender to our brethren, that rather than ruffle them with disagreeable *truths*, we suffer them to imbibe the most destructive *errors*. But we have, at least, no reason to believe, that any modern advocates for moderation, have at heart more charity than the primitive apostolical worthies of our holy religion. Now these (we find) never thought it their duty to soften the sin of schism, nor to relax the terms whereupon the return of such persons to the Communion of the Church was suspended. The Bishop would not then receive them at any, or at all, adventures, but they were to go through the common forms ; and were judged unfit for so great a privilege, if they refused submission to them. They, who well know that these principles are too strongly founded, to be easily overturned or denied with safety, have ever and anon suggested, that the times and seasons are improper for insisting on them. But I humbly answer, that we must now, or never, insist on them ; since all appearances forbode to us, that if they are not now recovered and retrieved to us, all remembrance of them soon will vanish ; and he, who in a few years hence, shall be so adventurous as to publish them, will be called (as the good Apostle was,) *a setter forth of strange Gods*."

of the Faith, as to be so clearly foreseen, we may well take courage and persevere. And if Apostles, and a long line of Saints and Confessors after them, with whom we are not worthy to be named, lost their ease, and the world's good will, and endured its ill-usage, surely we, to whom their trials have not come, and who have enjoyments which they were denied, do ill to complain for ourselves. Let us imitate rather their single-heartedness, and high devotion, and heroic deeds, and learn to follow the admonition of one, given when on his way to suffer for the Faith,—and "pray "without ceasing for other men; for there is hope "of their repentance that they may attain unto God. "Let them, therefore, be instructed by your works, "if they will be no other way. Be ye mild at their "anger, humble at their boasting; to their blasphe- "mies, return your prayers; to their error, your firm- "ness in the Faith: when they are cruel, be ye gentle, "not endeavouring to imitate their ways; let us be "their brethren in all kindness, but let us be the "followers of the Lord."[13]

I will make but one observation more, and then conclude. As the Church witnesses to the Faith, so also does she exhibit it. She has enshrined it in the sacred buildings all around us, and in which we worship; and they are, at once, its manifestation and its home. They are the means of its transmission and endurance; within them, generation after generation is engrafted into Christ, and they are the tribunals whence mercy is proclaimed, and forgiveness imparted to penitent sinners, by the commissioned ambassadors and stewards of the mysteries of the Eternal King. In them the great commemorative Eucharistic Sacrifice is offered, and the faithful nourished up to eternal

[13] S. Ignatius ad Ephesios § 10.

life, by the precious Body and Blood of our Lord. From them, also, the sacrifice of prayer and praise ascends; there instruction is delivered to God's people; and within them, and around them, the ashes of the departed faithful, repose in hope of a joyful resurrection.

Such are our sacred buildings, and, in the ages of Faith, ere men had lent themselves to a low rationalistic utilitarianism, they all, from the high Cathedral to the meanest village Church, were erected in accordance with one general idea; they all clearly and plainly told that the same Faith had disposed and arranged them, and that one and the same worship was offered within their walls. At the western end, and near an entrance, is placed the Holy Font, telling of our entrance into the Church by Holy Baptism, of which it is a continual memento: passing through "the long drawn aisle," signifying the Christian's pilgrimage, our eyes are made to rest on the Passion of our Lord, set forth at the eastern end; and the merit of His Sacrifice as our only hope, is represented by the Holy Altar; while the massive pillars which support the nave on either hand, remind us of the foundation of Prophets and Apostles, on whom the Church is built. At the end of the Nave is the Chancel Arch, which typifies to us the end of life; and as then, in order to arm us for our great change, we have especial need of Faith, this grace is symbolised often about the arch itself, or by the forms of Martyrs and Confessors, who were monuments of it, depicted in the rood-screen by which we enter the Chancel, which represents the Church triumphant, as the Nave does its militant state. By the Cross, "that sweet and "stern remembrancer," we are admonished of endureance for our Master's sake, and by "the accustomed "place" of the Church's daily offering of prayer and

thanksgiving, we are reminded of the Christian's privilege, his "armoury of unseen aids," and taught to reverence the precept of Him Who is the Strength and the Hearer of prayer:—"ask and it shall be given you, "seek and ye shall find;" "if ye being evil, know how "to give good gifts to your children, how much more "shall your Heavenly Father, give His Holy Spirit to "them that ask Him." By angelic forms, sculptured here and there, is set before us the guardianship of those Holy Beings, who stand before the throne of God, "and fulfil His commandments, in ministering to those "who shall be heirs of Salvation." Again, by her disposition of sacred seasons, by holy tide and other tide, she gives a voice, as it were, to silent Time, and makes it utter her mysteries. By her fasting, she points out the road by which Saints have gone to rest, and teaches us that, through much tribulation, we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; and, by putting self-denial upon us, she trains us to endure it. By her festivals, she shadows forth the eternal felicity of those "who endure to the end," and gives us an earnest of the endless rest of "the life of the world to "come."[14] By her rites and ceremonies, she sets forth "the beauty of holiness," and sanctifies things of sense, by associating them with unseen spiritual relations; by signs and symbols, she prepares us for the solemn

[14] "Well to celebrate these religious and sacred days, is "to spend the flower of our time happily. They are the "splendour and outward dignity of our religion, forcible wit-"nesses of ancient Truth, provocations to the enemies of all "piety, shadows of our endless felicity in Heaven, on earth, "everlasting records and memorials, wherein they which can-"not be drawn to hearken unto what we teach, may, only by "looking on that we do, in a manner read whatsoever we "believe."—Hooker, Eccl. Pol. bk. v. c. 71. See also, St. August. De Civit. Dei. Lib. x. cap. 3.

bowings down before the Throne, and teaches us to use our frail bodies in the worship of Him Who has redeemed both body and soul. Her rubrics are records of sanctity,—directions, how to throw into orderly outward form, the internal emotion and high adoration of Saints, whose bodies, indeed, were on earth, but whose hearts and conversation were in Heaven : and it is because their holiness is an intelligible character to ourselves, that the attempt to conduct the Church's Service, in obedience to her own prescribed rules, has been so unworthily met, and so senselessly and, I may say, wickedly opposed. What we seem now to have especial need of learning, is that religion has a severe as well as an attractive side ; and we may assure ourselves, that, until the stern duties of the Gospel exist otherwise than upon paper and on men's tongues,—in a word, till we incorporate them, and render them a fact, it is vain to look for much that is higher or better among us. May I not say that we are, in some measure, exhibiting truth in celebrating to-day, the Consecration of this House to God's service? God's ancient people observed times and seasons in commemoration of mercies and blessings : some they kept by His own command ; the institution of others was no further divine, than that they were appointed by authorities whom He had constituted for their government. Among the latter, was the Feast of the Dedication, set apart in remembrance of the purification of the Temple, after its defilement by profane and idolatrous rites ; and to this our blessed Lord gave the sanction of His presence.

We renew, year by year, the memory of days which have brought us temporal blessings,—yet the day which opened to us the courts of the Lord's house, that therein we might have shelter from this world's

wearinesses, we too generally permit to pass without any note of thanksgiving, though we are urged to it by the precept of our Lord's example. How strange is men's inconsistency! Or is it that they esteem the setting up of God's House in the midst of them, as something too ordinary to call for any special expression of thankfulness? They who know the value of their souls, and of the Church's consolations, will not say this; and the various arrangements, just completed, for conducting the Service in this Chapel, more orderly and decently than hitherto, declare that with you such a sentiment will find no sympathy. The Bible is above the words of men, for it is the Word of God, and from early times, a special place has been appointed, from which to read it during Divine Service; and, in future, its preëminence will be marked among yourselves by the erection of that Lectern, which is the pious offering of two or three individuals among you, I hardly know how many; and may this, and all else which they are enabled to do for the glory of God, be their stay and support in the great day of account.

Let us hope, then, that these are the beginnings of better things, and that this day, hitherto unobserved for one and twenty years, may be kept henceforth, year by year, continually. And though we have much to humble us, yet we are vouchsafed what is infinitely beyond our deserts: we are allowed "to "honour the Lord with our substance," and with the tenth of all our increase. We can send our gifts to the Altar, and are permitted to participate in the Feast which our Blessed Lord instituted, when about to depart in the flesh, that His presence with His Church might be more intimate and real. And if His presence be in the midst of us, and within us, what need we more? We have all and abound. There-

fore, my brethren, " bless God, praise Him and " magnify Him, and praise Him for the things which " He hath done for you in the sight of all that live. " It is good to praise God, and exalt His name, and " honourably to show forth the works of God ; there- " fore, be not slack to praise him." Seek, in the first place, your own salvation ; and, in the next, endeavour to help forward the peace of the Church. " Pray for " the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love " thee." So runs the promise, and he who daily lives more to God, and dies to the world, growing in humility and charity, best fulfils his Lord's command, and promotes the unity for which He prayed.

WILLIAM HODGETTS, PRINTER, CANNON-STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

2

A

SERMON

ON THE

DUTY OF BOTH THE CLERGY AND THE LAITY,

TO CONFORM TO THE RUBRICS

OF THE

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER,

PREACHED IN THE

PARISH CHURCH OF BIDEFORD, DEVON

On Septuagesima Sunday, 1845.

BY

ROBERT HENRY FORTESCUE, M. A.

ASSISTANT CURATE.

The profits to be given in aid of the Bideford Infant School Fund.

BODLEIAN LIBRARY OXFORD

BIDEFORD:

Published by W. S. BLIGHT;

SOLD ALSO BY EDWARDS AND HUGHES, LONDON; MANNAFORD, EXETER; NETTLETON, PLYMOUTH; BRIGHTWELL, BARNSTAPLE.

Price Sixpence,

or Four Shillings per dozen for distribution.

1845.

2

PREFACE.

The following Sermon was written in much haste, with but little previous thought or preparation, and without any expectation that I should ever be called on to give it a more permanent form than that of an ordinary Sunday discourse. It has now been printed in compliance with the warmly expressed wish of many of those, to whom it was addressed: a few notes have been added, and some trifling corrections and additions made in the discourse itself; generally, however, it appears, both in words and substance, as it was preached,—much parochial occupation, having prevented me from bestowing that additional labour upon it, which would have rendered it at the same time more useful to others, and more satisfactory to myself. The duty of treating such a subject at all would have more properly devolved, but for his indisposition, on the Rector of the Parish.

I gladly avail myself of the present opportunity of acknowledging the obligation I am under for my present convictions on the subject of Rubrical conformity, and for many of the ideas and arguments expressed in this discourse, to a pamphlet reprinted from the Christian Remembrancer, and published by Mr. Burns, of Portman Street, Portman Square, entitled, "The Moral effect of Irregularities in the Ritual of the Church." It is now about a year and half or two years, since that work came under my notice. I had previously regarded the duty of strict conformity to the Rubrics, very much as it is now

regarded by many good and conscientious Clergymen,—as a duty of trifling importance in itself, and for the neglect of which the practice of a large proportion of the Clergy, and the countenance of our Superiors, furnished a fully sufficient dispensation. This will account for my not having, in my ministrations in my former Curacy, endeavoured to revive the observance of those Rubrics, which have very generally fallen into disuse. My present convictions of my duty on this point are, comparatively speaking, of very recent date; and when they had been awakened, many circumstances conspired to render it extremely difficult, if not impracticable, immediately to act upon them. The consciousness, however, of my neglect, by whatever excuses I might attempt to palliate it, became to me a source of great and increasing concern and self-reproach. I longed to be so situated, as to be able, not only to pay strict attention to points of minor importance, but also to have Daily Service in the Church,—a duty, which, perhaps, more than any other connected with the observance of the Rubrics, involves the necessity of much personal self-denial. It will easily be believed, therefore, that in the following extract from the first sermon preached by me, after entering on the Assistant Curacy of this Parish,—an extract, which, perhaps, yet lives in the remembrance of some who heard it,—I expressed but the genuine dictates of my heart and conscience:—

"And, believe me, brethren, that—although to those who have not taken upon them the vows of the ministry, it may not appear so—it is cheering, it is comforting, it is *a relief to the conscience*, for a stranger to come among you, and find the Rubrics, the directions of the Prayer-Book,—those directions, by which we are bound, which we have promised to obey, and which we cannot transgress without transgressing our duty, breaking our solemn promises, and doing

violence to our conscientious feelings,—so nearly, so almost strictly observed. I feel convinced, that, if people would only regard the matter in this light,—if they would regard the restoration of Church order, not as a means of giving annoyance to others, or of needless opposition to deeply rooted prejudices, but as the result of a right and praiseworthy desire, on the part of their Ministers, to fulfil their own vows, and to keep their own word,—instead of looking with suspicion and dislike on those who have effected such restorations, they would only respect them the more highly, and love them the more sincerely."

Such having been the origin and progress of my own feelings on this subject, I shall not, I trust, on account of any thing I may have said in the Sermon now published, be suspected of a desire to cast reflections on such of my Brethren, as have not yet been convinced of the duty of conforming to the Rubrics, or, having been convinced, have hitherto been prevented by circumstances beyond their control, from *acting* on their convictions. On the contrary, the recollection of my own former opinions, and of my practice, even since those opinions underwent a change, disposes me to put the most charitable construction on the conduct of others, and to sympathise with them sincerely in any real difficulties, with which they may have to contend. My object, in the following discourse, was, not to attack others, but to defend ourselves. A circumstance altogether unforeseen,—the earnest request of many, whose kind and constant support, when the confidence of some was shaken, had entitled them to our sincerest gratitude,—has given a public and general character to what was originally intended only as an explanation of our conduct to our own Parishioners. Whilst, however, I am thus enabled to disclaim all intention of reproving others, I venture to indulge the hope that the additional publicity now given to the motives which

have influenced myself, may be not without its use even beyond the limits of this Parish. I would fain hope,—not only that others of the Clergy may be thereby persuaded of the validity of the arguments by which I have been myself convinced, and may, consequently, become earnestly desirous of fulfilling their obligations,—but also, that candid and generous-minded laymen may be led to the adoption of similar views, and may voluntarily use their influence to release their Ministers from embarrassments, under which they cannot but labour, as long as their sense of duty and their practice are at variance. Things cannot long continue as they are. Men are no longer ignorant of the nature of the vows we have undertaken. That any set of men,—much more, the Ministers of a Religion, which classes Truth among the first of virtues,—should be required to make promises which they are forbidden to keep, is too palpable an inconsistency to be retained, after public attention has been called to its existence. We must, either, be by competent authority released from our obligations, or be permitted to fulfil them.

It is to be hoped, the present excitement on these subjects will soon have an end. Men's minds will, under God, be sobered; they will coolly reflect on what is past; and all who are not above acknowledging themselves in error, will see how unreasonable it is, to deny to any set of men the right to fulfil their own promises, or to suspect of Popish tendencies those, whose sole offence seems to have been, their desire scrupulously to adhere to the Prayer-book of our Reformed Church. The advocates of strict conformity will be found more numerous than ever. The ignorant, fanatical, abusive, and even turbulent opposition, with which the Clergy have been in some places harassed,—the irreverent and insulting tone, which has been assumed even towards Episcopal authority,—cannot but have gained many

converts to a cause so resisted. Those who employ such weapons, defeat their own end. Instead of crushing, as they hope to do, the objects of their resentment, they do but strengthen them. Such has ever been, and such ever will be, the result of persecution. "The blood of Martyrs is the seed of the Church." To adopt the words of a living writer and godly man,—"It does but make our spirits rise cheerily and hopefully, thus to be encountered..... We know our place and our fortunes; to give a witness and to be contemned, to be ill used and to *succeed*. Such is the law, which God has annexed to the promulgation of the Truth; its preachers suffer, but its cause prevails. Be it so. Joyfully will we all consent to this compact; and the more you attack us personally, the more, for the very omen's sake, will we exult in it."

R. H. F.

Bideford,
Ash-Wednesday, 1845.

SERMON.

1 Cor. xiv. 40.

"Let all things be done decently and in order."

To an ordinary reader of Scripture it may appear, that, although under the Mosaic dispensation the most minute directions had been given respecting the mode and external forms of Divine Service, nothing of this kind was ordained or cared for by those inspired men, who were commissioned by the Almighty to make known to mankind His new and more merciful Covenant with them in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The idea most commonly impressed upon men's minds by perusing the pages of the New Testament, is, that our Saviour and his Apostles confined their attention to "the weightier matters of the Law," the duties of godliness, righteousness, and temperance, as the fruits of Christian faith, to the entire exclusion of mere ceremonial observances; that, because our Lord found fault with the Scribes and Pharisees for being scrupulously attentive to matters of little importance, whilst at the same time they were grossly negligent of such essential virtues as purity, justice, and mercy, He intended us to understand, that forms and ceremonies are of no importance at all. They listen to His voice, when He says with regard to the weightier matters, "These ought ye to have done;" but they too often turn a deaf ear to what was equally and at the same moment His advice with regard to things of minor importance, "And not to leave the other undone." *a*

a Matt. xxiii. 23.

Hence it has been, not only that great numbers of professing Christians have disregarded and despised those Ordinances, which rest on the sole authority of the Church, and have acted as if it were a matter of indifference whether they obeyed them or not,— but also that they have gone so far as to undervalue, and even to neglect, those which were appointed by our Lord Himself, the blessed Sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, presumptuously reasoning, (for it *is* presumption, where God's Word speaks so distinctly to the contrary,) that, as long as their hearts are right,—as long as they attend to the inward and spiritual part of Religion,—their neglect of (what they call) outward and formal Ordinances will not be taken into account, or visited as sinful.

To those, however, who really *study* Scripture, a very different view presents itself. They see that, although we have not laid before us in the Epistles, in a regular and systematic method, the Liturgies or Forms of Divine Service appointed by the Apostles in the first founded Churches, we have very strong presumptive proof that such Forms *were* appointed, and that the Apostles, so far from regarding the spiritual part of Religion as every thing, and the formal part as nothing, in fact considered matters of very inferior importance indeed, worthy of their serious attention and particular arrangement. The chapter before us is, by itself, sufficient to prove what was St. Paul's practice on this head. He who declared, as that Apostle did, that "God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace," [a] was most unlikely to leave the infant Churches to the almost inevitable disorder which would have ensued, had the members of each Church been allowed in their public assemblies to adopt any plan of Service, which might suggest itself at the moment of worship.

[a] 1. Cor. xiv. 33.

The very fact of his adding, "as in all churches of the saints," would lead one to imagine, that in *all* churches of the saints *some* particular Form had been appointed by Apostolical authority for the express purpose of preventing "confusion" and securing "peace."

Accordingly, we find in this chapter the most minute directions given with regard to the use of those miraculous gifts, with which it pleased the Almighty, in the first years of Christianity, to prove both to believers and unbelievers the Divine origin of the Gospel of His Son. They were enjoined to use them in an orderly manner,—not vainglorioously, or as if each were endeavouring to excel the rest,—but in such a way as might tend to the conversion of the heathen and the edifying of the Church. So with regard to other matters. In the thirty fourth verse, women are absolutely forbidden to speak in the Church. In the eleventh chapter, directions are given as to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, with especial regard to those abuses of it which had crept into the Corinthian Church. *a* And the Apostle, having said as much as he deemed necessary for the time, concludes his admonition in these words,—"The rest will I set in order when I come;"—thereby clearly implying that, when present, he entered more into particulars than he could conveniently do in a letter.

In the same chapter he commends them, because, as he said, "ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you;" *b* proving by this, that, when present with them, he had given him other instructions beside those referred to in his epistles; for it is evident, that here he refers to those alone, which the Corinthian Christians had not sufficiently regarded. He then proceeds to notice a matter so minute as a portion of their dress; and having directed that women should wear a covering on their heads, and that men should

a 1. Cor. xi. 17. 34. *b* ib. 2.

be uncovered in the Church, and apparently expecting that this rule would not be very cheerfully obeyed, he briefly adds,—"If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God;" *a* implying by these words, that the Apostles *had* authorised a custom on this point, and that this custom was in all Churches the same.

From the sixteenth chapter we learn, that directions such as these were not confined to the Corinthians, although, on account of the very disorderly character of that Church, St. Paul had found it necessary to repeat and again enforce in a letter, what he had already enjoined by word of mouth. He there speaks of having given to another Church a similar direction to that which he was then giving them. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order *to the Churches of Galatia*, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him." *b*

These are all the passages which I shall at present quote, though they might be considerably multiplied by others to a similar effect from the Acts of the Apostles, and from the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. But these are sufficient for my present purpose. They prove, I think, beyond a doubt, that the holy Apostle did not consider unworthy of his attention many things, which we are apt to regard as of very trivial importance; but that he condescended to ordain the mode and order of Divine worship, a part of the dress of the worshippers, and the time for collecting the alms of the faithful; and the circumstance of his referring to these in an Epistle to a disorderly Church, coupled with the statement that, when formerly present in their city, he had instructed them to the same effect, lead us to the very natural conclusion, that he

a 1. Cor. xi. 16. *b* 1. Cor. xvi. 1.

ordained also other rules for the celebration of Divine Service, to which, however, as the Corinthians had not infringed them, he was not called on particularly to refer. And, having so ordained them, although the matters may have been unimportant in themselves, he expected his commands to be obeyed,—his object being, that all things should "be done decently and in order." Another point to be observed is, that St. Paul not only exercised this degree of authority himself, but also committed it to those who were to be the rulers of the Churches after him, charging and empowering them, to "set in order the things that were wanting;" *a*—and having thus invested them with authority, he enjoined the people to *submit* to that authority,—saying to the Hebrews, and through them to others, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves;" *b* and warning Timothy to "let no man despise his youth." *c*

This view of St. Paul's words is strongly confirmed by what we know of the practice of the early Church not so very long after the time of the Apostles. Many Liturgies and parts of Liturgies are preserved to us, which were actually used by the Church during some of the first centuries. Three are mentioned as having been composed by St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James, which, though corrupted by later ages, are doubtless of great antiquity. *d* In the earliest ages, each Bishop was at liberty to frame a Liturgy for his own diocese; afterwards, the Bishops of a province agreed, by consent, to conform their several Liturgies to the model of that of their Archbishop. And the reasons why these matters

a Titus. i. 5. *b* Heb. xiii. 17. *c* 1. Tim. iv. 12.

d Wheatly on the Common Prayer, p. 13. Ed. 1819; to which work, as well as to Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, and Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, I must refer the reader for a fuller and more learned investigation of the whole subject.

were settled by the early Church, and Ministers were not permitted to offer up their own crude or extemporaneous effusions to the Throne of Divine Mercy, were,—because in so doing they were following the practice which prevailed in the Jewish Temple, where David's Psalms and other Forms of prayer and praise were constantly used in Divine Service,—as well as the example of our Lord Himself, Who framed for the use of His disciples the Form, which we commonly call "the Lord's Prayer,"—and also, as it is expressed in one of the Canons of an ancient Council, "Lest, through ignorance or carelessness, any thing contrary to the faith should be vented or uttered before God or offered up to Him in the Church." [a] We prepare our words, before we present our petitions to an earthly king; how much more ought we to do so, before we presume to draw nigh to Him, Who is King of kings and Lord of lords!

It would have been indeed surprising, if, following as our Church does, in other respects, the teaching of the Bible, and the practice of the Catholic or Universal Church in the purest ages, she had adopted a different rule with regard to her public services to God in His own House. But she has *not* done so. In her twentieth Article she has plainly stated the doctrine, that "the Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies;" and it is to her wise and tender care in carrying out the principle thus stated, that we owe those forms of Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, and of administering the Sacraments and other holy Rites, which it is our privilege to possess in the Book of Common Prayer. Those Forms, prepared and purified from Romish error on the one hand, and guarded on the other against Sectarian novelties, by learned and godly men, were

[a] Council of Milevis A. D. 402, quoted in Sparrow's Rationale, p. 2.

received, approved, and subscribed by both Houses of Convocation, *a* which is the Church's legislative body, in the year of our Lord 1661; early in the following year they received the sanction of both Houses of Parliament,—were assented to by the King, and thus became in a lawful manner a part of the laws of this Church and Realm; and, having been so made, they can *lawfully* be neither repealed nor altered by any power on earth but that which enacted them. In those Forms, not only has she furnished us with Prayers, and Thanks-givings, and Manuals of instruction for nearly every conceivable condition, in which frail, sinful, and suffering humanity can be placed; but also she has directed us *how to use them.* Having before her the same object, at which St. Paul was aiming in his Epistle to the Corinthians, that, "all things be done decently and in order," remembering too, that "God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace," and therefore desiring to secure, not confusion, but peace, in the public worship of His people in His own Sanctuary,—she has instructed us how to comport ourselves in the several parts of Divine Service. She has distinguished between the duty of the Minister, and the duty of the people, so that, if both took care to *do* their duty, all

---

a The Convocation (i. e. the Council or Synod) of the province of Canterbury, consists of two Houses, called, for the sake of distinction, the Upper House, and the Lower House. The Upper House consists of all the Bishops of the Province,—in number, twenty-two; the Lower House, of twenty-two Deans, fifty-three Archdeacons, twenty-four Proctors (or deputies) of chapters, and forty-four for the parochial Clergy, and one Precentor,—in all, one hundred and forty-four. (See Lathbury's History of Convocation p. 118.) The Convocation assembles at the first Session of each Parliament, but it has not been permitted to transact business since the year 1717; when it gave offence to the Government by proceeding, in the discharge of its duty, to condemn some objectionable publications of Hoadly, Bishop of Bangor, who was a favorite at the court of George I.

would proceed in a sweet, edifying, and harmonious order; and we should indeed "with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." *a*

She has commanded us when to come, and when to depart,—when to stand, and when to kneel,—when to speak, and when to be silent. These directions (I am thus particular for the sake of the unlearned,) you will find in your Prayer-books,—that is, if your Prayer-books were printed by one of the authorised printers,—*b* immediately before or after the prayers to which they relate. They are printed, for distinction's sake, in a different kind of type or letter from the rest of the Book, and are called "the Rubrics," —from a Latin word, signifying "red;" because, when the Prayer-book was first published, instead of being in letters of a different *shape*, they were printed, in order more immediately to arrest the attention, in *red* letters,—*i. e.* in letters of a different *colour* from the prayers themselves. Thus, if you turn to your Prayer-books, you will find before the first common prayer we offer after entering the Church, beginning,—"Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,"—that it is "*a general Confession, to be said of the whole Congregation after the Minister, all kneeling.*" Would to God that all who call themselves Church-people, would obey the Church even in this easy requirement, and indeed kneel, when they confess their sins, and beg for pardon from Almighty God! From the Rubric before the next Form we learn, that it is "*the Absolution or Remission*

a Rom. xv. 6.

b Persons, desirous of purchasing Bibles or Prayer-books, should be careful to observe whether those offered to them were printed at either of the Universities, Oxford and Cambridge, or by the Queen's Printer. The correctness of no others can be equally relied on.

i. e. the forgiveness) *of sins, to be pronounced by the Priest alone, standing; the people still kneeling.*" Would to God that this direction also were attended to! for if persons *would* attend to it, if they would only observe that it is to be pronounced 'by the Priest *alone*, we should not see so many joining in it and repeating it *with* the Minister, apparently not knowing, or not remembring, that *he* is authorised to pronounce forgiveness to *them*, if penitent, not they to him.

And now, brethren, having thus explained for the benefit of those who before were ignorant, the meaning of the word 'Rubric,' you will be better able to proceed with me to those, which have been the chief cause of my addressing you on this subject at the present time; those, I mean in the Communion Service,—immediately after the Nicene Creed, and at the end. We there read that after the Curate has given certain notices, if there are any to be given, "*then shall follow the Sermon or one of the Homilies already set forth, or hereafter to be set forth, by authority.*" You will observe, there is not one word about a Psalm being sung, or a prayer offered. And the reason why the Sermon is to be *immediately* commenced, without Psalm or prayer, is this; because the Nicene Creed was held to be a kind of continuation of the Gospel,—the Priest, you may observe, *not* being ordered to say after the Gospel, "here endeth the holy Gospel." as he says after the Epistle, "Here endeth the Epistle." The Gospel then, being concluded with the Nicene Creed, the Sermon was regarded as an exposition of the Gospel, or of some part of that faith, which had just been professed in the Creed.

The next Rubric teaches us what is to be done after the conclusion of the Sermon. "*Then shall the Priest return to the Lord's Table, and begin the Offertory, saying one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient in his*

discretion." And then, having placed the alms (if there be any) upon the holy table, and having placed there also, if there be a communion, so much Bread and Wine as he shall think sufficient, he is to say the Prayer "for the whole state of Christ's Church militant, (engaged in war, *i. e.* against the powers of evil,) here in earth." If there be a Communion, he is then to proceed with the Service in the usual manner. If there be no Communion, the course he is to pursue is laid down in the Rubric, which you will find immediately after the end of the whole Service. "*Upon the Sundays and other Holy-days, (if there be no Communion) shall be said all that is appointed at the Communion, until the end of the general Prayer* [for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth,] *together with one or more of these Collects, last before rehearsed, concluding with the Blessing.*"

Now what, brethren, can be plainer than all this? How can there be two opinions as the meaning of these directions? And remember, they are imposed upon us by those authorities of the Church, which Christ and His Apostles have made it our duty to obey. We cannot, whether Clergy or Laity, refuse obedience to them in our several stations, without refusing to "obey them that have the rule over us."

The Church, however, thought uniformity in Public Worship of too great importance, and was too well acquainted with human nature, to leave the observance of these rules by a large body of men to a mere sense of duty. Since, therefore, the greater part of the Rubrics declare the duty of the Minister, and only by consequence that of the people, she has endeavoured to secure obedience to her rules by obliging the Clergy *solemnly and repeatedly to promise*, that they will observe them. When we were admitted to the Holy Orders of Deacons and Priests, —when we were licensed to our several Curacies,

—when those who are beneficed were instituted to their respective benefices,—we each of us solemnly declared, that we would "conform to the Liturgy of the United Church of England and Ireland as it is now by Law established." And that declaration we were ordered to read, within three months after it was made, in the Church,—in the face of our respective congregations,—to be our apology for obedience, and our condemnation, if we should think fit to set it at nought. So that, should the arguments from Scripture, from the practice of the early Church, and from the authority of Convocation, be disproved, or set aside as unsatisfactory, we have yet another to fall back on, which no subtlety of reasoning can explain away, no array of conflicting Rubrics, Canons, or Statutes, can deprive of its force. We have each of us, individually, repeatedly, and with our own lips, *declared* that we would obey, Yes, brethren,—at the very same time when we undertook the awful responsibility of the Ministerial office, we declared that we would conform to the Liturgy; when we took and retook the Oath of Allegiance to the Queen, and swore to her Supremacy (within this Realm) over the Pope, and every other foreign Prince or Prelate, we declared that we would conform to the Liturgy; when we subscribed the thirty-nine Articles, and professed our sincere belief in the doctrines therein contained, we declared that we would conform to the Liturgy. Was all this any thing or nothing? If, at the caprice and will of man, the declarations are to be void, why not also the vows? If a contrary custom is to cancel the promises, why not also the oaths? And if custom is to cancel *these* oaths and *these* promises, why not also *other* oaths and *other* promises? By the same rule, should it ever be the custom (which God forbid!) for jurymen to perjure themselves, then their perjury would cease to be a crime. Should it ever be the custom (which God forbid!)

for judges and magistrates to decree wilfully unrighteous judgments, then their partiality and injustice would be without guilt in the sight of God and man. The monstrous absurdity of such an argument is manifest, as soon as ever we apply it to another case. If words have meaning, we declared that we would conform to the Liturgy—not as as it is *by custom*, but—as it is *by Law* established; and if any promises are binding, then surely is this.

I have said thus much, my brethren, in the hope of convincing you, that it is no perverse or self-willed obstinacy, no strained interpretation of an imaginary duty, which has induced the Rector to decline acceding to a request expressed by some, and felt, perhaps, by others among you, for sundry alterations in the present mode of conducting Divine Service in this Church. I have endeavoured to shew you, how the case stands between God, the Church, and our own consciences. I have endeavoured to do so *dispassionately*,—without indulging in anything like an unkind or personal reflection upon any one,—with a due sense of reverence for this holy Place, in which we are assembled; though it is indeed difficult to avoid feeling, and feeling strongly, where our own peace of mind, and the right fulfilment of our plighted word, is so intimately at stake. I deeply regret that any occasion should have arisen for spending your time on a subject, apparently so little connected as this with your most important interests. And yet, that can hardly be deemed an unimportant subject, which has tended to diminish the good understanding which should always subsist between Pastors and their flock. We had hoped that it would be unnecessary; we had trusted that what we had said to many in private on this subject, would have sufficed to acquaint all with our real motives, and would have induced all to desist from urging us to do, what we *cannot* do without the

violation of very solemn engagements. It has been through no fault of our's, that these hopes have been in part disappointed. Circumstances have occurred, which have made it necessary for us, in the discharge of our duty, to speak of ourselves, and to set before you distinctly the grounds, on which we have acted, and shall continue to act. To adopt St. Paul's words to the Corinthians,—"*Ye have compelled*" *us.* [a] We have, therefore, done what we could; and we must now leave it to God's Good Spirit, and your own sense of what is right, to induce you all to acquiesce cheerfully, and to persuade others to acquiesce, in those arrangements, which the authorities of the Church, and not we, have appointed. We must rely on your Christian charity,—on your valuation of (what St. James calls) "the royal law" [b] of doing to others as you would have them do to you,—nay, and on that feeling of generosity, which has long been one of the boasted characteristics of this great nation,— for our being no more pressed to act in opposition to our conscientious convictions of our duty. Surely, it is no trifling matter, no matter of indifference, to endeavour to force or persuade men to act contrary to what they believe to be their duty. Surely, it is as the sin of Saul the persecutor, who, not content with "making havoc of the Church," and "haling men and women, and committing them to prison," crowned his guilt by "COMPELLING THEM TO BLASPHEME." [c]

We cannot doubt, brethren, that, on reflection, you would respect us less, and we are sure we should respect ourselves less, if we should be prevailed on by fear, or by a miserable desire of popularity, to tamper with our oaths, and to cast our promises to the wind.

I would remind you, too, that the sacrifices required from us and you are by no means equal.

a 2 Cor. xii. 11. *b* James ii. 8. *c* Acts viii. 3. & xxvi. 11.

With us it is a question of duty, or neglect of duty,—a question of truth or falsehood. With you, on the other hand, it is little more than a question of liking or disliking; or, at the most, whether or not you shall remain for a few minutes longer in that place, to which David was glad when he was invited to go. [a] *We* have *promised to conform* to the Liturgy; *you* have *not* promised *not to conform* to it. Nay, and I will say more than this, though, perhaps, it may startle some of you to hear it said,—you *have* promised, if not so particularly, yet quite as solemnly as ourselves, that you *would* conform to the Liturgy. For when you were baptised, you promised,—when you were confirmed, you renewed that promise,—when you have partaken of the Lord's Supper, (unless indeed that duty has been neglected by you) you have again and again sealed the promise,—that you would keep God's Commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life. And one of God's Commandments (and there are many others to the same effect) is, that you should "obey them that have the rule over you." And one command of those who have the rule over you, is, that Divine Service in the Church should be performed according to the Form prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. This command, therefore, you have—not less really, because indirectly—promised to obey; and you, as well as we, are bound by your own pledged word to conformity.

So, when you have repeated the Catechism, or when you have taught it to your children, you have acknowledged it as a part of your duty to your neighbour, "to submit yourselves to all your governors, teachers, *spiritual pastors* and masters." Doubtless, this admission is anything but palatable in an age so intolerant as the present of all Church authority:

[a] Psalm cxxii. 1.

but if it means anything, its meaning must surely be, that it is our duty to submit ourselves, in all things lawful, not only to our more immediate spiritual pastors, our parochial Ministers,—nor only to the Bishop of the Diocese in which we live,—but, especially, to that body, which is above both Ministers and Bishops,—the body, which gave authority to the Rubrics, and which alone has power to make, to alter, or to rescind the laws of this Church,—the Convocation or Council of this Province.

There is one point, on which, though I fear I may detain you beyond our usual time, I cannot conclude without saying a few words. I refer to the use of the Surplice in preaching. Now, this is admitted, even by those who desire that it should be discontinued, to be in itself a matter of indifference. We confess on the other hand, that we do *not* consider it altogether a matter of indifference. For,—to say nothing of the authority for its use to be derived from Rubrics and Canons,—*a* as it is acknowledged to be the *most proper* vestment to be worn in the other parts of Divine Service, as emblematic of that purity of heart, which we ought to have in approaching God, and as covering with a spotless robe the poor, sinful mortal who ministers, and leading the people to look, not at the man, but at his office,—so is it most suitable also in *this* part. For, though the words we utter from the Pulpit, are, strictly speaking, neither the words of God, nor of the Church, but an exposition of both by a fallible individual Minister, yet what we *do* say, we say as God's Ministers, and in God's Name. And, therefore, since we wear a white vestment in other parts of Divine

a The question of the legality of the Surplice and Gown, respectively, has been made the subject of considerable research by the Rev. T. H. Britton, Lecturer of Bideford, who, it is hoped, will be induced to publish the result of his labors for the benefit of the Church at large.

Service, because we are acting as God's Ministers, so likewise should we wear it, for the same reason, in this. If our *fallibility* be a reason for its being laid aside in preaching, then the same objection would hold good against its being used in the prayers, in catechising, or in the performance of any Service, but that of reading the inspired Word itself.

We wear it, also, as being *most convenient*. For, since there is no authority for any Psalm before the Sermon, and the Rubric requires us to return to the Lord's Table immediately afterwards, there is no opportunity for that double change of vestment, which would be necessary, if, in preaching, another robe were substituted for the Surplice. And further, if a Psalm, though wholly unauthorised, *were* sung,—not only would the Service be thereby considerably lengthened, and so risk be incurred of offending others,—but also, the Minister himself would have ground for just complaint, that, by his necessary absence in the vestry, he is deprived of a privilege, to which he is as much entitled as the people,—the privilege, namely, of joining in the blest praises of God.

But the practice of preaching in the Surplice is objected to, as being Romish. Were this objection valid, it would be equally strong, if not more strong, against the use of it in other parts of Divine Service. For, certain it is, that in the Roman Churches vestments of a similar colour are worn by the officiating priests during the prayers; whereas I am credibly informed, (though for this I do not vouch,) that in England, France, and Italy, if not in other countries, the sermon is preached in a black gown. [a]

a Since the Sermon was preached, repeated confirmations of this statement have been received from persons who have themselves witnessed the practice of the Romish Priests, both in England and on the Continent.—One family, in particular, whose acquaintance with the subject admits of no question, have assured me, that a black gown is invariably worn in preaching, except when the Sermon is delivered by one of the *officiating* priests *in mass*.

Another objection which has been urged, is, that at any rate the use of the Surplice in preaching is, in our own Church, the badge of a party, and, as such, reasonably distasteful to the people. It ought to be sufficient, to give you, in reply to this, *our solemn assurance*, that, whatever others may do, we, at least, do not wear it as the badge of a party, and that we belong to no party in the Church. For what *is* a party? Perhaps we may rightly define it to be, a body of men associated for some common object. And, taking the word in this sense, we desire most solemnly to deny, that we are associated with any party or division in the Church; and if, brethren, we are unworthy of your confidence in this assertion, then I do feel most deeply that we are unworthy of it in anything. But, supposing that it *were* worn by us as the badge of a party, would the putting it off be an effectual remedy for the evil? Most assuredly, not. I am sure that all among you, who have had experience of the world, and have profited by their experience, must know full well, that party and party-spirit are things, which strike deeper and stick closer than either the surplice or the gown. It is easy to strip men of a vestment; but it is *not* easy to divest them of opinions, which are the result of deeply-rooted and conscientious conviction.

In conclusion, brethren, let me ask you to apply to yourselves St. Paul's words in the thirty-seventh verse of this same chapter: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." The more you count yourselves to be spiritual and sincerely religious, let me entreat you the more readily to submit to the order of the Church in all things consistent with the commandments of the Lord, even as though it were *His* commandment. Remember,

our Lord's words to St. John the Baptist; "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." *a* The time, brethren, is short. We have, in reality, no time to waste on such matters, as have lately caused in the Church so much dissension. It is no kindness to yourselves to allow feelings of umbrage and discontent to occupy your minds, when they should be engrossed in the worship of Almighty God: it is no kindness to us, your Ministers, to distract our attention from what should our great objects,—the advancement of God's glory, and the salvation of your souls. It will afford you but little comfort in the hour of death and in the Day of judgment, to reflect, that, for the sake of what to you were trifles, you have wasted precious time, disturbed the composure of your own spirits, and increased the difficulties, and aggravated the anxieties (though unintentionally) of those who "watch for your souls, as they that must give account." *b*

"One thing," brethren, "is needful:" happy, thrice happy, they, who choose "that good part which shall not be taken away from" them! *c*

a Matt. iii. 15. *b* Heb. xiii. 17. *c* Luke x. 42.

W. S. BLIGHT, PRINTER, HIGH-STREET, BIDEFORD.

CONFIRMATION:

WHAT IT IS;
THE AUTHORITY ON WHICH IT RESTS;
THE DUTY & PRIVILEGE OF RECEIVING THE RITE:

A SERMON,

PREACHED

IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, BOWLING,
BY BRADFORD;

BY

J. LOXDALE FROST, M.A.,
INCUMBENT.

LONDON: F. & J. RIVINGTON;
BRADFORD: E. A. W. TAYLOR.

"CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE."
(Joshua, ch. 24; part of v. 15.)

In the Books of Moses we read that Jehovah, with mighty signs and wonders, brought His people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, in order to lead them by the hand of His servant Moses into their promised inheritance, the land of Canaan. Having been conducted safely through the divided waters of the Red Sea, and through the wilderness or desert of Arabia, they reached a point close to the southern border of their promised possession. Then, in consequence of their unbelief and disobedience, they were turned back again into the wilderness, there to wander for the space of about forty years; towards the close of which time Moses died, having been permitted to take a view of the land of rest from the top of Mount Pisgah, and having, by divine command, appointed Joshua his successor.

In the Book of Joshua we have an account of the miraculous manner in which that valiant servant of the Lord was enabled, by the help of God, to lead the people safely through the river Jordan up into the land of Canaan;—how vast numbers of the warlike inhabitants of the country were driven out before them;—how the land was divided among the twelve tribes by lot;—and that finally "the Lord gave rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about."

But Joshua's race was now run;—having performed the work unto which the Lord had appointed him, he bends beneath the common infirmity of man; for, as we read at the first verse of the twenty third chapter, "It came to pass a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age." He therefore calls all Israel together to hear his parting exhortation, his solemn advice; and he then implores them, by the remembrance of all the benefits which God had hitherto bestowed upon them, by promises of continued blessings, provided they remained obedient, and by threatenings of God's dreadful vengeance, should they provoke Him to wrath,—by these considerations he implores them to continue, steadfast and faithful, the people of the Lord.

But this is not all: we read in the chapter out of which the text is taken, that "Joshua again gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before the Lord." He then gives them a short history of God's benefits to their nation from the time that He chose

Abraham out of an idolatrous country, up to that present day in the which God had "given them a land for which they did not labour, and cities which they built not, but now dwelt in, and vineyards and oliveyards which they planted not, but the fruit of which they now did eat." "Now therefore," says he, in the fourteenth verse, "fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, *choose you this day whom ye will serve;* whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood," (i. e. the idols whom the ancestors of your father Abraham served, who lived on the other side of the river Euphrates,) "or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye now dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." In other words he reminds them that God had entered into a covenant with Abraham; that this covenant had been renewed with their fathers who lived in the days of Moses; that the Lord had truly performed one part of *His* engagement by giving them the land of Canaan which He had promised to them; that He had yet in store for them still greater blessings, provided *they* performed *their* part of the covenant by believing and serving God: and he then solemnly calls upon them to declare whether or not they were willing to agree to, and confirm, and renew, in their own persons, the covenant which had been made with their forefathers. And oh! what a solemn and interesting occasion must that have been! In the midst of the assembled multitude of the hosts of Israel, Joshua, the aged and venerable war-

rior, appears. The sharer of all their sorrows and adversities, their companion and leader in their triumphs and successes, now warned by the infirmities of old age that the time of his departure is at hand, and convinced that he must very soon exchange the *earthly* for the *heavenly* Canaan, must soon lay aside the perishable chaplet of temporal victory for an eternal crown of glory; this victorious general and faithful servant of God has assembled his countrymen together to hear his dying words. He cannot leave them in peace, till he has heard them, in the presence of God, and with their own lips, renew and confirm the covenant which the Lord had made with their fathers. "*Choose you,*" says he, "*this day whom ye will serve;* but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." "And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods: The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." This done, the aged chief was content to die; for "it came to pass after these things, that Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old." (v. 29.)

Such is the substance of the history connected with this truly interesting and affecting portion of God's word. I do not, however, intend, upon the present occasion, to dwell on this appeal of Joshua to the people of Israel: I have chosen the subject because of the resemblance which I think it bears to a very interesting and a very important rite which is in use in the Church of England; I allude to the sacred rite of *Confirmation.*

The Bishop of the Diocese has made known his intention of holding a Confirmation in this parish next month.

Notice to this effect has been given; the Ministers of the Church have been waiting to receive the names of such as intend to offer themselves on the approaching occasion, and have been ready to examine, to instruct and to prepare all such: but I am grieved to say, that up to the present time a lamentably small number, in this District, of those who "having been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ," (Gal. iii. 27.) and who "profess and call themselves Christians," have presented themselves as candidates for this holy rite; and it is to be feared that this neglect is not confined to this particular division of the parish. With such a distressing fact before me, I have felt it to be my duty, earnestly and affectionately to call your serious attention to this subject; and as I cannot help thinking that this apathy or disregard respecting confirmation must arise from ignorance of the thing itself, I shall endeavour

1. *To explain* WHAT CONFIRMATION IS:
2. *To show on what* AUTHORITY *the practice is founded: and*
3. *To point out the* DUTY *and* PRIVILEGE *of receiving this rite.*

To include these points within the limits of a single discourse, I must necessarily be very brief on each; and many causes lead me to fear that I may not treat the subject with that ability which its importance demands: still, however, if I have your undivided attention, and your earnest prayers for the blessing of the Holy Spirit, I shall not despair of some good being done.

1. *What* IS *Confirmation?*

Confirmation is the renewing and confirming our baptismal vow, and the acknowledging with our own mouths, our obligations to fulfil it. Some persons suppose that in confirmation they are to receive something from the Bishop, that he is to do something to them, but that they themselves have little or nothing to do in the matter. Let us see what the Bishop himself says on this point. If you refer to "the Order of Confirmation," in the Book of Common Prayer, (it comes next after the Catechism,) in the commencing address we find the Bishop saying that "Children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, (present themselves) that they may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same; and also promise that by the grace of God they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things as they, by their own confession have assented unto."

Baptism is a *Covenant between God and the child;* our Lord Jesus Christ, on *His* part, promising that He will "vouchsafe to receive the infant, to release him of his sins, to sanctify him with the Holy Ghost, to give him the kingdom of heaven, and everlasting life; provided that, by God's help, the baptized person fulfils *his* part of the engagement, viz. 1st, "that he will renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; 2nd, that he will believe all the articles of the Christian faith; and 3rd, that he will keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life." Before the child

is baptized, *his Godfathers and Godmothers** promise all this *for him;* and when he comes to a proper age, *he is asked at Confirmation, Does he agree to all this?* Let us refer again to "the Confirmation Service";—"Then shall the Bishop say," "Do ye here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you?" "And every one shall audibly answer," "I do."

As *Joshua* called upon *the children of Israel* to ratify and confirm in their own persons the covenant which Abraham and Moses had entered into for them; so *the Church* calls upon *her young people* at confirmation to ratify and confirm the covenant which at Baptism their

* Where children are baptized in Church *without Godfathers and Godmothers*, the idea of a *Covenant*, (the master key to the true explanation of the service,) is excluded. If, when there are no Sponsors, the service be read entire, a large portion of it is rendered a mockery. If it be mutilated, by leaving out the parts relating to Sponsors, room is given for the introduction of dangerous delusions.

By this irregularity the following express commands of the Church (among others) are broken:

The 2nd Rubric at the head of "The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants." "*And note, that there shall be for every male-child to be baptized, two Godfathers and one Godmother; and for every female, one Godfather and two Godmothers.*"

The 3rd Rubric in the same place, "*And then the Godfathers and Godmothers, and the people with the Children, must be ready at the Font, &c.*"

The Act 14th Charles 2nd, commonly called "An Act for Uniformity," is also broken.

Sponsors entered into on their behalf: both Joshua and the Church, appealing, in the same spirit, if not in the same language, "*Choose you this day whom ye will serve.*"

After prayer for the manifold gifts of God's Holy Spirit, the Bishop lays his hand upon each of the young persons before him. Why? That, as though by magic, some wonderful change should be wrought in them? That there should be some *extraordinary* communication of the Holy Ghost, as there sometimes was in the Apostolic age? No such thing. The services of Christ's Church are ridiculed, misrepresented, and blamed, because the nature and intention of these services are little understood. Let us again appeal to "the Confirmation Service." In the Collect after the Lord's Prayer, the Bishop thus prays: "We make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands," —(now let us see for what purpose) "to certify them" (i.e. to assure them) "by this sign, of Thy favour and gracious goodness towards them."* "Of which goodness," says Archbishop Secker, "they will continually feel the effects, provided, which must always be understood, that they preserve their title to His care by a proper care of themselves. This it must be owned is a truth; and we may as innocently signify it by this sign as by any other,

* The 60th Canon commences thus:

"Forasmuch as it hath been a solemn, ancient, and laudable custom in the Church of God, continued from the Apostles' times, that all Bishops should lay hands upon children baptized, and instructed in the Catechism of Christian religion, praying over them, and blessing them, which we commonly call *Confirmation*," &c.

or as by any words to the same purpose. Further efficacy" (adds the same Archbishop) "we do not ascribe to it; nor would have you look on Bishops as having or claiming a power, in any case, to confer blessings arbitrarily on whom they please; but only as petitioning God for that blessing from above which He alone *can* give; yet, we justly hope, *will* give, the *rather* for the prayers of those whom He hath placed over His people, unless your own unworthiness prove an impediment. Not that you are to expect, on the performance of this good office, any sudden and sensible change in your hearts, giving you, all at once, a remarkable strength or comfort in piety which you never felt before. But you may reasonably promise yourselves, from going through it with a proper disposition, greater measures, when real occasion requires them, of such divine assistance as will be needful for your support and orderly growth in every virtue of a Christian life." To the same effect Archdeacon Hale writes: "When indeed the Apostles laid their hands upon the baptized, they at the same time conferred upon them the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit; but though our Church teaches us to regard the laying on of the Bishop's hands only as "a sign" intended to "certify the confirmed of the favour and gracious goodness of God towards them," without asserting that the Holy Ghost is thereby positively conferred; still we cannot hesitate to believe, that *as* our ordinary prayers and intercessions are means of grace to ourselves and others, *so* in a more especial manner are the prayers of the Church and of the Bishop effectual to procure the ordinary gifts and graces of His Spirit to them who "ask in faith, nothing wavering."

I will only add, that, while the *giddy and thoughtless* may pass through the sacred ordinance without apprehending anything but *an outward ceremony*, we do not hesitate to assure the *humble, sincere, faithful, and obedient receivers of this rite*, that *they* may, without presumption, expect to derive from it *such a measure of God's favour and blessing, as shall enable them to "go on their way rejoicing."*

In Confirmation, then, the young people come to acknowledge for themselves, to ratify, and *confirm*, their baptismal profession; and the Bishop comes, that by his prayers and blessing, he may encourage, strengthen, and *confirm them* in their godly resolutions. Such is, I believe, a *Church* view of *Church Confirmation.*

2. I have, *secondly, to show on what* AUTHORITY *this practice of Confirmation is founded.*

And to *Churchmen*, no further authority need be stated than *the requirement of the Church.* Bishop Burnet says "the Church requires all who have been baptized, to come before the Bishop, and renew their baptismal vow. And for this no higher warrant is necessary than the authority with which God has invested her, of "doing all things to edification."

But we need not rest in this authority; for we can prove it to have been *the practice of the primitive Church.*

As the *Jew* at thirteen years of age was obliged to present himself in the Temple, there to profess and declare his assent to the covenant made with his forefathers, of which he had received the sign and seal in the ordinance

of circumcision; so was it natural to suppose that the *Christian*, who had been baptized in his infancy, should, when he came to a proper age, present himself before the congregation, to "renew, ratify, and confirm" the covenant into which he had been admitted in the Sacrament of Baptism. And such, indeed, was the custom in the early times of the Christian Church: Among the ancient Christian Fathers, I may mention *Tertullian* who lived at the close of the second and beginning of the third century, *Cyprian, Jerome, Clement,* and others, who speak of Confirmation as a rite existing in the Christian Church in their times. At a Council held in Spain in the year 305, it was decreed "that all persons baptized, should be brought to the Bishop, in order that they might be perfected by his benediction and imposition of hands."

But we go still higher for authority: we will appeal to *the word of God itself;* and from this source I can imagine that some may suspect no proof will be forthcoming. Let us see; I shall refer you to two passages only: the first is contained in Acts viii.; in which we find that Philip the Deacon had preached the Gospel in Samaria and had baptized many. But at the fourteenth and following verses of the chapter, we read "Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." If some *additional ministration* had not been necessary, for what rea-

son is it to be supposed that two Apostles should have gone from Jerusalem, to lay hands upon those that had been baptized in Samaria?

There is another passage. You will find it in Heb. vi. 1, 2; "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of *laying on of hands*, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Here then, among the six fundamental principles of the doctrine of Christ, St. Paul reckons "the laying on of hands" to be one. And, without discussing the text at length, for which we have not time, I may observe that no clear, satisfactory, or probable interpretation can be put upon the words "*laying on of hands*" except that of *Confirmation* after the Sacrament of Baptism.

So that our *authority* for *Confirmation* rests on the *appointment of the Church; the testimony of the primitive Fathers; and the example of the holy Apostles.*

3. We come now to the third division of our subject: *The* DUTY *and* PRIVILEGE *of receiving the rite of Confirmation.* And on this head I may be very brief; for what can be plainer than that, if a covenant has been entered into for our benefit when we were children, when we come to age we should ourselves ratifiy and confirm the same? What can be plainer than that, if we expect to receive the *reward* of *Christ's servants*, it is our *duty* openly to *profess* ourselves *to be the servants of Christ?* What can be plainer than that if we would *continue*

members of the Church of Christ, it is our *duty* to comply with the *requirements* of that Church? What can be plainer than that, when *the Church* appeals to us, "*Choose you this day whom ye will serve;*" it is our *duty* to reply "*The Lord our God will serve, and His voice will we obey?*"

And is there no PRIVILEGE in this rite of Confirmation? Is it not a *privilege* to be permitted to renew our covenant with our gracious God, and to declare in the face of the Church our resolution, by God's help, to perform our part of the blessed engagement? Is it no *privilege* to have the prayers and benediction of our Bishop for our perseverance in our holy resolutions? Is it no *privilege* to be assured, through God's chief minister in the Church, of His favour and gracious goodness towards us? Is it no *privilege* to be "strengthened with the Holy Ghost the comforter, to have daily increased within us the manifold gifts of God's grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true Godliness, and to be filled with the spirit of the holy fear of the Lord now and for ever?"* Is it no *privilege* to enjoy an ordinance of the church through which we may receive such a further measure of the grace of the Holy Spirit as shall strengthen us to subdue, more effectually, the indwelling corruptions of our nature, (Article 9,) and, more than ever, "not to be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil?" (Public Baptism of Infants.) Is it no *privilege* to be admitted to the

* Prayer in "the Order of Confirmation," Isaiah xi. 2.

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, there "spiritually to eat the flesh of Christ and to drink his blood," in order to "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls?" *

Reflect on these things, brethren, and I think you will see that the *duty* of Confirmation is *plain*, and its *privilege great*.

Let me now address those before me who are yet unconfirmed. I trust I have clearly explained to you *what Confirmation is;* I have briefly pointed out the *authority* on which it rests; and I hope I have proved to you that it is your *duty* and *privilege* to be partakers in the benefits of this sacred rite. I appeal to you then; Do you intend to devote yourselves to the world, the flesh, and the devil, or to be the servants of the Lord Christ? Will you earn "the wages of sin which is death;" or do you desire to receive "the gift of God, which is eternal life?" (Rom. vi. 23) *"Choose you this day whom ye will serve?"* I hope you will all answer that you are desirous of confirming your baptismal vow. But still some of you may say that you cannot spare the time; or you think you are too old; or you are ashamed to make yourselves so public. I have but one answer to give you; but it is an awful one, contained in the last three verses of the eighth chapter of St. Mark, the words of our blessed Redeemer, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give

* Here let me just remark, that, unless confirmed, or ready and willing to be confirmed, no one can properly come to the Lord's Table; for the rubric at the end of the Confirmation Service is express on this point; it is this, "*And there shall none be admitted to the holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.*"

in exchange for his soul? Whosoever, therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

If you neglect this sacred ordinance of Confirmation, you do, in fact, declare that you are unwilling to remain in the Christian Covenant, that you are careless about remaining in the Church of Christ. You were, indeed, in Baptism, made "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven;" but unless by the grace of God given unto you, you "stand to the covenant," (2 Kings, xxiii. 3.) and are enabled to perform your part of it, you will become paralyzed, dead "members" of Christ, eventually cut off; you will cease to be "children" of our Heavenly Father, who has *adopted* you of His free mercy; you will disinherit yourselves, and no longer be "heirs" of the kingdom of heaven.

My young friends, believe me, in this world you have to contend against numerous and powerful spiritual enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil all conspire to effect your eternal ruin; and nothing can save you but the preventing grace of God, and the strength of His Holy Spirit within you. Resolve, then, that whatever others do, you will serve the Lord; and refuse not the invitation of the Church to renew, at confirmation, your covenant with your God. If you have any doubts, any difficulties, do not hesitate to come and tell them to your ministers, (whose duty it is to watch for your souls) and they will endeavour to remove them.

Notice has been given of the times at which the can-

didates are to assemble for examination, instruction, and preparation.* But if there be any of you who cannot possibly then attend, for you some more suitable hour shall be appointed. You shall have no excuse but your own unwillingness.

I am the more earnest with you to "*choose* THIS *day, whom ye will serve*;" because next week you will most probably receive invitations of a very different character.† Then the annual scene of riot, of excess, drunkenness, and immorality, will commence in this district. At every step you take, temptation will allure you to evil; and unless you be saved by the mercy and grace of God, some of you will perhaps have to date, from that time, the loss of your health and worldly prospects, the commencement of your temporal and everlasting ruin. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: for their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood." (Prov. i. 10, 15, 17.)

Let me not be mistaken. Do not suppose that religion is a gloomy, melancholy thing, allowing no enjoyment to its professors. No! the genius of Christianity is the direct reverse of this; for one of the fruits of the Spirit is "joy:" the Christian cannot indeed enter into the boisterous mirth, nor indulge in the unlawful pleasures of the world, but in all proper and reasonable enjoyments, he will take his part, not deeming himself more holy than

* At *Bowling*, every *Sunday* Afternoon, in the Vestry, after Divine Service; and every *Thursday* evening, in the School-Room, at Eight o'clock.

† In allusion to the Feast or Tide then to take place.

his Lord and Master, who not only was present at the celebration of a marriage in Galilee, but actually prevented the disappointment of those who had assembled to join in the festivities of that occasion by turning the water into wine. (John ii.) But against unlawful pleasures, against "revellings, drunkenness and such like," I do warn you: and I once more charge you, "*Choose you this day, whom ye will serve.*" May God put it into your hearts to say, "*The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey.*" And may He "confirm you all unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. i. 8.)

One word to those in the congregation who have taken Christ's yoke upon them, and who are pursuing their course, humbly following the steps of their Redeemer. I would remind those of you who hold the interesting and important office of Godfathers or Godmothers, of one charge which the Church committed to you when you undertook the office, "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as *he* can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and be further instructed in the Church-catechism set forth for that purpose." (*Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants.*)* To you and all other confirmed believers we appeal for your prayers on behalf of the younger members of our flock; to you we look, that, by your advice and friendly admonition, you will encourage them to take upon them-

* The Third Rubrick at the end of the Catechism directs that "*Every one shall have a Godfather, or a Godmother, as a witness of their Confirmation.*"

selves the profession of the Gospel of Christ. Finally, brethren, we bid you "go on your way rejoicing;" be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" and be assured that while you remain pilgrims in the wilderness of this world, God will continue to feed you with manna from heaven; if you continue "steadfast in the faith," He will lead you safely through the Jordan of death, and at last receive you into your promised inheritance, the Canaan of everlasting rest.

"Now unto Him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. (Jude, 24, 25.)

E. A. W. TAYLOR, PRINTER, BRADFORD.

ɔD'S HOUSE A HOUSE OF PRAYER:

A Sermon

PREACHED BY

ΓHE REV. WILLIAM GRESLEY,

Prebendary of Lichfield,

AT

THE CONSECRATION

OF

ꞱT. MARK'S CHURCH, WYRLEY,

IN THE DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD,

ON TUESDAY, THE 22ND OF JULY, 1845.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

LONDON:
RIVINGTON, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH YARD;
BURNS, PORTMAN STREET.
LICHFIELD:
LOMAX, AT THE JOHNSON'S HEAD.
1845.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

A SERMON,

&c.

Isaiah lvi., vii.

"Mine House shall be called a House of Prayer for all people."

ALL Christian people who are here present feel, I am sure, that it is a day of great joyfulness—a day of great joyfulness for the dwellers in this district. But the joy is not confined to them alone. May we not believe that the angels of heaven look down with satisfaction; and that Almighty God himself views with approval the work in which we are engaged, of consecrating a new temple to His name.

The words, which I have just read to you from Holy Scripture, refer primarily to the Temple at Jerusalem. But they speak of Gospel times. They speak of the time

when Christ, the Holy Victim, having been slain for the sins of man, and having risen from the grave, and laid the foundation of His Church and Kingdom,—all nations should be called to do Him service; and, not in Jerusalem only, but in every nation under heaven, men should build temples to His name, and lift up everywhere holy hands, and worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Thus applied, the words will suggest to us many profitable thoughts, both respecting the building and dedication of a new temple to God's service, and also the mode in which we should regard and use it, when so dedicated.

"Mine House" says the Almighty, "shall be called an House of Prayer." *Mine House.* Yes! it is now God's House! Solemnly offered and set apart for Him. What was yesterday but a heap of stones is now God's House—separated from common uses—hallowed—consecrated to Him for ever—at least until this earth itself shall be no more—or until the hand of ruthless violence, or the spirit of rebellious antichrist shall sweep over

the land, and bring desolation upon all that is good and holy. Henceforth this House is an appendage of the Christian institutions of our country; and nothing but the same evil power which shall destroy ourselves, and all that we hold more dear and sacred, can wrest it from its holy destination. Henceforth it is God's House—not that He dwelleth in it, as though he could be confined within the limits of a temple made by human hands; but it is the place where He condescends specially to meet His people, according to the word which He spake to His people Israel—"In all places where I record my name, I will come to thee, and I will bless thee."

Every principle of right reason, and revealed religion, as well as natural feeling, teaches us that the utmost care should be devoted to the structure and adornment of a House dedicated to so Holy a Being, and destined for such sacred uses. We doubt not, indeed, that God accepts with merciful condescension, the poorest offering that his servants can make, provided we make it with a pure heart and willing mind—as the best

we have to offer. And what are our best offerings but poor, and utterly unworthy of so great a God as our God? Still, dwelling as we do in one of the richest dioceses in the world, where not only the surface of the land is fruitful in every herb and grain, but the very bowels of the earth teem with valuable mines, which yield an abundant increase of wealth, comfort, and prosperity—here, I say, it were shameful not to use our best endeavours that the House of God should be suitable, so far as our poor exertions can make it, to its high and holy purposes.

There are several obvious principles to be attended to in the structure of a Christian Temple. The House of God ought to be a building *distinct in character* from all others —distinct from our private dwelling houses— and from our buildings of public resort— our school-rooms, our theatres, our lecture-rooms. It should at once convey the impression to him who enters that he is on holy ground. His conscience should be impressed with reverence—an involuntary awe should fall upon his mind. He should feel that

worldly, frivolous, or wicked thoughts are altogether inconsistent with the place.

Again, the essential part of God's service is, that we worship Him in sincerity and truth: that we lift up pure hands and hearts—without hypocrisy and without guile. Correspondently with this feeling, the very structure of God's house should be *genuine and real*—nothing should appear what it is not. We should not do as the poor Indian, who having vowed a wedge of gold to his idol, presented in its stead a piece of gilded wood. All we do, and speak, and think, should be sincere and true—as being done unto a pure and holy God, who is the great searcher of hearts and discerner of the spirits of men.

Again, God is eternal—His Church and Kingdom are eternal. His worship is destined to continue as long as the world endures. His House therefore should bear the impress of *durability*. It should be so built that we may reasonably hope that our children, and children's children, for many generations, may assemble under its roof to worship the Lord their God.

Furthermore, all the details and objects that meet the eye should, as far as possible, be so constructed and arranged as to remind us of God and heavenly things. Thus the first object which we behold on entering is the Holy Font: which puts each child of God in remembrance of his adoption into the family of Christ, of the privileges which he then received, and of the inheritance secured for him in heaven, by God's infallible promise, if he continue faithful to the end. Inscribed on the walls is God's handwriting, especially those ten commandments, written by his own finger, according to the letter and spirit of which every child of God must live. Thus the very walls speak the language of inspiration. The triple window at the East, will serve to remind us of the great object of our belief—the Trinity in Unity—and especially of that great doctrine which is the centre and keystone of our faith—Christ crucified for the sins of man. The Holy Table of the Lord brings to our mind that mystical union with Christ and with each other, which commenced in the Holy Sacra-

ment of Baptism, and is continued and consummated by a frequent and faithful participation in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

To some persons perhaps it may appear of little moment to insist on visible objects like these—but not, I am persuaded, to the most deep-thinking and experienced Christians. The man of truest wisdom and warmest piety will recognize the fitness and necessity of availing ourselves of every legitimate means whereby a devotional spirit may be kindled in men's hearts—and their thoughts led away from earthly things, to things heavenly and spiritual: and will feel that not only the honour of God, but the well being of man requires that much attention should be devoted to the outward proprieties of the arrangement of God's House.

From the external objects, let us now pass on to a consideration of the holy uses to which they are all conducive and auxiliary. "Mine House," says the Almighty, "Mine House shall be called a *House of Prayer*." What is Prayer? Prayer is that humble, faith-

ful, adoring spirit, that trembles before God, yet relies wholly on Him, and devoutly loves Him. But prayer—united prayer—such as we use in God's House, is, or ought to be, far more heart-stirring, than mere private prayer. It is the accumulated out-pouring of a multitude of souls, strengthened by union and rendered more intense by sympathy—heart responding to heart, as voice responds to voice. And the Holy Service of the sanctuary is not to be looked on only as a means to an end—it is not ordained only to make us holier and better men, though this is its blessed effect. But it is an end itself. It is our bounden duty and service which we owe to God—yea, rather our privilege and highest occupation. It is a foretaste of the occupation of heaven—an anticipation of the life of angels, who worship continually before the throne of God.

In order that we may worship God aright, when we come into His House of Prayer, two things are requisite—two things separable in idea, but not so in reality, namely *inward holiness*, and *outward reverence*. Without

these our worship is of no avail, yea, rather an offence to God. . . . .

I pray you, Brethren, consider this matter attentively. It is a very solemn thing to enter God's House—lightly as some may think of it. Henceforth, whensoever you cross this threshold, you should think upon Him Whose House it is—you should leave behind you all wordly, frivolous, and carnal thoughts, you should subdue the feelings of your soul to reverence and holy awe, and let every look and gesture be composed accordingly. Let me set before you a similitude, which, inadequate though it be, will serve to illustrate my meaning. Suppose you were to enter the presence chamber of the Queen of these Realms. How careful would you be to behave with proper respect and due observance—how fearful to offend against the rules of propriety. How diligently would you inquire beforehand, in which way it became you to show your respect to her exalted rank. Well! exercise but a Christian faith, and whensoever in future you enter this House, believe yourselves, as you really are,

in God's presence chamber—in the presence chamber of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Think that God is here present, surrounded it may be, with a host of angels—and that he marks every look and gesture, and knows every thought of your hearts. Oh let us take heed that all our thoughts and feelings are subdued and hallowed as becometh creatures in the immediate presence of their Creator; yea, still more as sinners before the throne of their most just and holy God. Only impress yourselves with these feelings, which in truth are but the spontaneous emotion of a living faith—and there will be the less need of anxiety as regards your outward conduct. Reverent behaviour will be the instinctive mode in which the feelings of your heart will clothe themselves as often as you enter into God's House of Prayer.

I dwell the more earnestly on this subject, because I am sorry to say that these essential requisites of an acceptable service are too often wanting in many of our places of worship—and without them it is to very little purpose that Churches are built at all. An irreverent

careless service is neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to ourselves. I would therefore beg very earnestly and affectionately to impress upon those who will henceforth form the congregation in this Church, that they endeavour, *from the beginning*, to cultivate a right spirit and behaviour in the service of God. It has been a great satisfaction to me during the short connexion which I have had with this parish, to observe the interest taken, by many of the principal residents in the district, in the progress of this work. I would beg to remind them that the proof of the value of this additional means of grace is about now to be made; and that on them, as occupying the principal station in respectability and influence, depends very much the character which the attendance and the worship in this Church will assume. On your behaviour, my Christian friends, on the example which you give of regularity, reverence, and true devotion, depends mainly the value of this new Church to the surrounding district. I know nothing so thoroughly unsatisfactory and disheartening as to see, what I am sorry

to say may too often be witnessed, that is a crowded congregation, and apparently no worshippers—to see men sitting in irreverent postures when they ought to kneel—gazing listlessly around, when their whole souls ought to be intent on God's worship—taking no part—uttering no response—in short giving no sign whatever that they are engaged in worship at all! And yet how very common it is to witness scenes like this! How many places of worship might you enter, in which scarcely any of those present seem really to be engaged in the object for which they are nominally met together. On the other hand nothing is more cheering and edifying—nothing more encouraging to God's minister, or more grateful in the sight of God himself and of His holy angels, than to see a sincere and earnest congregation, offering a true and holy worship, joining with heart and voice in the service of their Maker. It is sometimes assumed that a Church answers the object for which it was built, if it is well filled. That is a most fallacious criterion. I would rather see comparatively a small number of persons

met together really to join in the worship of God than the most crowded congregation where the spirit of prayer is absent.

Allow me to add one or two plain and practical remarks on this very important subject.

In the first place, I think that all who have considered this subject will acknowlege that, generally speaking, *it is next to impossible to pray rightly without reverently kneeling.* There is something so unseemly and inconsistent with propriety, so affronting to God, so disrespectful to our fellow worshippers in sitting negligently at our ease, when the prayers are being offered up, that I would most earnestly beg your attention to this point. For let us be well assured that those who neglect to kneel, do not very often pray. And if the congregation do not pray, the Church itself is of no use or benefit whatever.[1]

Next to kneeling in attitude of devotion, the most important point—so far as can be

(1.) Care has been taken to provide accomodation for kneeling in Wyrley Church for all persons without distinction, and it is particularly requested that the Churchwardens will deem it a part of their duty to keep the kneeling benches in a proper state for use.

judged by what appears externally, (and it is by that alone that a judgement can be formed)—the most important point is *the joining in the responses*—and this too depends very much on the example given by the principal person in the Church. If *they* do not join others will not; and so the whole service falls to the Minister and the Clerk. The congregation takes no part—and the service itself appears dull and uninteresting. How much better, how cheering and enlivening it is to hear the hearty "Amen" burst from the lips of the whole congregation—and to see that all present enter with heart and soul into the spirit of our beautiful service, and really take their part in the solemn worship. Instead of the weariness and listlessness that too often creeps over the mind, and causes it to wander elsewhere, we feel that we are really engaged in an important work which demands our whole attention. In the one case our service is a profanation to the House of God, in the other God receives it with approval, and rewards it with His blessing.

Another very important point to be attended to is *the singing*. Nothing more helps to relieve and enliven the service than attention to the singing. Even a few voices, as you have heard to day, will produce a beautiful effect. But how much more solemn and impressive must it be when the whole congregation, with one voice, old and young, rich and poor, one with another, pour forth their voices in hearty unison. Nothing is more grand and affecting than the sound of many voices. The want of skill in individuals is lost in the solemnity of the combined effect. I do therefore earnestly hope that the members of this congregation—those I mean who are to form a permanent congregation in this Church—will not be satisfied until they have qualified themselves to take their part in the chorus of thanksgiving, and sing God's praises heartily and with a good courage.

The time does not permit me to enter more at large into the details of public worship, though much might be added respecting the frame of mind in which it becomes a congregation to listen to the instruction from

the pulpit—and still more with regard to that most solemn and sacred office of our religion, the Holy Supper of our Lord, on which I sincerely hope you will never turn your backs. What I have already said will not be thrown away, if it induces you to turn your minds diligently and faithfully to the best mode of rendering to Almighty God in this His House of Prayer such a service as will be acceptable in His sight, and conducive to the health and comfort of your own souls.

The observations which I have made on proprieties of public worship cannot, I trust, be so far mistaken, as that any one should suppose that more importance is attached to external ordinances than to inward holiness. It is because I know the essential value of true holiness,—of what inestimable price it is—how difficult, how impossible it is to attain it without the use of all those means which a merciful God has afforded us, that I urge on you a diligent and devout attention to the public service of the Church. Ordinances have been sometimes called, by way of dis-

paragement, the mere scaffolding whereby the edifice of faith and holiness is built. It is scarcely possible to mention a similitude by which their value and necessity is more forcibly shewn. How was it possible, without the help of scaffolding that this House of Prayer in which we are now met, should ever have been raised from the ground. Just so without the use of ordinances, how is it possible to build up the fabrick of faith and holiness, and render our souls and bodies fit to be the dwelling places of the Holy Spirit. Believe me, my Christian friends, it is but the excuse of worldly irreligious men, or the prejudice of very weak ones, to dwell on the need of purity of heart and Christian faith, and at the same time discourage the use of those means whereby these graces are to be attained.

Lastly, Brethren, "mine house," says the Almighty, "is the House of Prayer *for all people*." All Christian people, high and low, rich and poor, young and old, who dwell together in one community or neighbourhood, ought to meet together in God's

House of Prayer to render Him their bounden service. None should absent themselves but those who resolve deliberately to continue in the ways of sin. Here the infant will obtain admittance to the covenant of grace—the young as well as old receive spiritual instruction—the sinner will humbly confess his sin, and obtain absolution—the advanced Christian will have grace given him to persevere in his godly course. Here each important incident of your lives will have God's blessing upon it—and here, at death, those who die in Christ will rest in peace. I would not on the present occasion say one harsh or unkind word respecting any class of persons, especially with regard to those who err perhaps without intention—I mean the dissenters from our communion. But I would apply to them as well as to others, the words spoken by the Almighty in the text. "Mine House shall be called an House of Prayer for *all* people." Yes, Brethren, the House now consecrated to our common Father, is built for *all* who name the name of Christ. Why should we not all henceforth worship

God together in it? Are we not all brethren in the faith, redeemed by one common price —believers in one God and Saviour? Do we not all look for salvation through His most precious blood? Do we not all pray for the same sanctifying Spirit? Are we not all bound by the same holy law? Why then, since our hopes and fears, our spiritual wants and interests are the same, why should we not all henceforth worship God together —together enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise?

O that the Spirit of God might so descend amongst us and sanctify our hearts, that all who call upon His name might henceforth be joined together in the bands of Christian love, and worship in His House of Prayer with united hearts and voices.

One topic yet remains for me to advert to before concluding—that is to solicit your benevolent contributions towards the completion of what I trust you will consider to be a charitable and holy work. All who have been engaged in similar undertakings, will be well aware that there are many expenses

not easily calculated beforehand, which greatly increase the amount of outlay—and also that, in the desire to complete their work, those engaged in it are induced to rely very much on the kindness and good will of the congregation assembled on the day of consecration. You will not therefore depart, I trust, my Christian friends, without giving substantial evidence of the sympathy and good will with which you have joined in the holy ceremony of this day.

I pray God that we all may have cause to remember this day with a grateful remembrance; and that you especially, who are the inhabitants of this district, may have grace given you to worship God with true hearts in this His House of Prayer; and that the blessings of Christian love, and joy, and peace, may be abundantly showered on you and on your children after you for many generations.

LICHFIELD:
PRINTED BY THOMAS GEORGE LOMAX, AT THE JOHNSON'S HEAD.

A SERMON

ADDRESSED

TO CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS,

PREACHED AT

ST. CLEMENT'S CHURCH, IPSWICH,

ON WHIT-MONDAY, 1845,

BY THE REV. EDWARD HARSTON,

LATE RECTOR OF ST. STEPHEN'S.

IPSWICH:

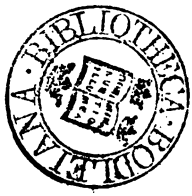
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY FREDERIC PAWSEY.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS, PATERNOSTER ROW, AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

Price 3d. each, or 2s. 6d. per dozen.

5


BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

AN ADDRESS

TO CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS.

"Thine own Friend and thy father's Friend forsake not."—*Prov.* xxvii, 10.

How easily a short useful sentence may be remembered by us, if we try! Children who find it hard to learn *long* lessons, seldom mind a very short one.

Now our text is a very short lesson: one which any child may readily learn: and perhaps king Solomon wrote this book in proverbs, on purpose: because he had so much to say to young people.

My dear young friends—hearken to what I say, and "the Lord give you understanding."

Many things are best when they are *new*. I suppose we all like a new house, new clothes, new playthings. But there are some things which are best when they are old, and *friendship* is one of

these things. An old friend, dear children, is more to be loved than a new one. And so, Solomon (who was the wisest man that ever lived, and who wrote this book under the teaching of the Holy Spirit) recommends young persons in the text to love an *old* friend better than any *new* one.

And I think every sensible child will be able to understand why. It is with a person's friends, just as it would be with a poor lame man, who could not walk without a crutch. Suppose you offered him a *new* crutch, instead of the old one he had used all his life: I think that though the *new* one might be better looking, he would like the *old* one best. He would say "I would rather keep the other—I have often used it, and I *know* that it will bear my weight. But perhaps the *new* one may break. At any rate it has not been *tried* like the other, by long experience."

Just so, until a *friend* has been tried, who can tell, if he is such a friend as we may trust?

Now my young friends, I am going to put a question to you. Who is your *oldest* friend? Who is there that loved you before any body else did?

Your ministers and teachers have loved you ever since they knew you—but there is a Friend that loved you before *they* did! Your parents

have loved you a still longer time—but there is a Friend that loved you before *they* did! Who was the Friend that loved young Samuel, Josiah, and Timothy? Turn to Jeremiah xxxi, 3, in your bibles. Who is it that says there—"I have loved thee with an *everlasting* love."

And if my text gives you such good advice, as regards those friends who have loved you here on earth, how important is it when applied to *this* Friend, whose love is older than the world itself, yea "from everlasting!"

Let me then invite you all to try and think of some things I am going to say to you about this Friend—and may the Holy Spirit incline you to make Him *your* friend, and then, never to forsake Him as long as you live.

My business will be to give you some *reasons*, why you should make the Lord Jesus Christ your Friend: and the

1st reason is—*because you are so young.* I call this text, pre-eminently a child's text. Young people need a kind and judicious friend, much more than those who are older. In what a sad condition would any poor little child be, who had no father, nor mother, nor even a *friend!* Is not this a good reason for our desire that you should make the Lord Jesus your Friend?—Though you

are so young, and weak, and ignorant, yet He is all-powerful, and all-wise. Though you are "poor and needy," yet if Christ be your friend, He will "think" on you, and help you. It was He that was David's friend, when he went against the lion, and the bear, and the giant: and great as is your danger, and many as are the enemies of your souls, yet you need fear nothing, if only Christ be your Friend.

Besides—childhood is the season when our hearts are most tender. Our hearts are like the ground—in winter, hard and frozen—in summer, dry and dusty—but in *spring*, moist and soft. The heart of an old person who has lived all his life "without God in the world," is bound up against all religious impressions, as by the frost of winter. The heart of a person in the summer of life, is too often scorched up by worldly cares, pursuits, and pleasure! But in *childhood*, the affections are more tender, the mind more ready to receive good impressions, like the ground to receive seed in spring: so that if you begin to love Christ now, we may hope that you will love Him better and better as you grow older: whereas, if you neglect His friendship now, the probability is, you will care still less for it by and bye. What numbers of persons there are, who have

long since grown up to be men and women, and yet remain careless about their souls. The reason is this—they disregarded my text when they were young, and now that they are old, they have lost all relish for religion. Would you wish to grow up like them? Then neglect not to make the Lord your Friend now: for as I have shown you, your hearts are in a much more favorable state *now*, than ever they are likely to be, when you are more heavily burdened by the cares of mature life.

Moreover, in early life, we find it *easier* to trust a friend. A disposition to confide in another, is peculiar to your age. A young person will often listen, even to a deceitful friend. If sinners entice, how easily is he led astray. He does not suspect evil. He leans upon his friend and looks up to him.

But now, Christ is a Friend whom you may safely trust. He is better than any other friend, and therefore every wise child will cling to Him, and value His love above every thing else. As your hymn teaches,

> "Earthly friends may fail or leave us,
> One day soothe, the next day grieve us:
> But this Friend will ne'er deceive us!"

And therefore, since youth is a season of inexperience—when the heart is more tender, and the

affections more confiding, I repeat, make Jesus your Friend, because you are *young*.

2. My second reason is this: *because of the dangers that surround your path.*

Perhaps *you* do not *see* any dangers. Children seldom do. But you know very well that there are a great many dangers in the world which you do not see. Did you ever hear of a little child being bitten by a snake? How did that happen, do you think? Do you suppose he *saw* the snake before he felt it? No—the snake was *hidden* among the grass and flowers, and so the child stepped on it and got bitten, *because he did not see it.*

Ah! how true a picture of life is this! How many a snake lurks in the flowery paths of the world! Ask your parents—ask your teachers, if it is not so. What is Satan, but a snake in the grass, "an adder in the path?" What are the world and the things of the world, but tempting baits, to lure you to your ruin? My young friends, your way through the world *abounds with dangers.* How many a young person has perished through bad companions! or how often have the snares of the world proved as a snake in the grass.

But worse than all, your chief danger arises from *within.* Your own hearts are the nest of evil thoughts and sinful passions. How prone

are children to self-conceit—to wilfulness—and ill-temper! All these proceed from one common source—a sinful heart. As it is said of the many graces, which in various proportions adorn the Christian character: "all these worketh that one and self-same spirit"—so, of the many sins which disfigure the lives of ungodly children, or ungodly grown persons, may it be said with equal truth, "all these worketh that self-same principle of evil, —sin in the heart!"

And I need not tell you what are the *wages* of sin. If a farmer sows tares, it is folly to look for a crop of wheat: and if any one "sows to the flesh," he must, "of the flesh, reap corruption."

Thus your danger arises from *sin*; which, if not destroyed, will assuredly destroy *you*. "Lust when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

And this is my second reason for wishing you to make Christ your friend; because He came to *destroy* sin: because His blood cleanseth from all sin.

3. But let me now add a third reason why you should make Christ your Friend now: *because of the dreadful misery of many who have grown up to be men and women without His friendship.*

We cannot see men's hearts; but yet we know that many persons are very miserable in their

minds, and very uneasy in their consciences. Perhaps some of these never had the means of seeking the friendship of Jesus, when they were young. They had no one to teach them the way. They were out of the reach of the pure means of Grace. Or perhaps others of them were urged to make Christ their Friend, but would not. "God called, but they refused." They were taught this subject at school, but they gave no heed to what they were taught. They heard sermons, but they did not attend to them. They knew God's truth, but they loved it not.

And now God is terribly repaying them in after years. They seek for peace, but they do not find it. They cannot pray, they cannot praise God. Their hearts are sad, and their lives wretched. And alas! how many a life spent in neglect, is ended at last in despair! You know that the ministers of Christ are very often called in to witness a scene, which probably you, my young friends, have not yet witnessed—I mean a *death-bed*. And you know, I doubt not, which is the *happiest* kind of death-bed—that of the saint on his way to glory. But shall I tell you which is the most awful death-bed? It is that of one who has hardened his heart against God all his life, and now comes to find out *too late*, what a fatal mistake he has made.

O let the thought of such misery persuade you to seek the Lord Jesus as your Friend, without loss of time. Do not put God off with excuses, for a single hour, but make Jesus your Friend immediately, because of the misery of many who have neglected to do so.

4. But I cannot refrain from adding a fourth reason why you should make the Lord Jesus your Friend: *because of the happiness of those who have done this.*

Yes! they who have Him for their Friend, are truly happy. They have their *best* things in the next life. But God gives them many good things even now.

And here, my young friends, words fail! I cannot describe to you the happiness of that young disciple, who has Christ for his Friend. Is it sweet to a weary child to go to rest on his mother's knee? There is sweeter rest in the love of Jesus! Would it delight the poor condemned prisoner in his cold gloomy cell, if he might creep into the sunshine and warm his chilly limbs? The soul that has felt itself "tied and bound with the chain of its sins," feels yet greater joy in receiving the warm beams that are shed on it by the Sun of Righteousness.

Yes! One who has Jesus for his Friend is truly happy. He may be poor, or he may be

rich—he may be young, or he may be old—he may be wise, (as to other things) or he may be foolish: but there is no one in all the world, so *really*, so abidingly happy, as the friend of Jesus. And well he may be: for Christ has said to him, "All things are yours." And again, "They that love the Lord, shall want no manner of thing that is good."

Here then is a fourth reason why you should make Christ your Friend—because of the happiness of all who do so.

I do not wish to burden your memories with too many points at a time; but there is one other reason which I must name, because it is the *best* reason of all.

Consider 5thly, *the worthiness of Jesus to be your Friend.*

There never was such a Friend to poor sinners, as the Lord Jesus Christ. You may have *other* friends, *great* friends, *rich* friends, *clever* friends—but not one of them is so worthy as He.

What are the things that help to make a good friend?

One child answers—"A good friend is one who is *able* to do us good." Another replies—"He must *know how* to do us good." While a third answers—"He must keep his promises, and then we shall know that he is a true friend."

Now, my children, the Lord Jesus Christ is just such a friend as this. He is *able* to do us good, He *knows how* to do us good, and He *always keeps His promises!* In other words, He is a powerful, wise, and faithful Friend.

1. Jesus is a powerful Friend. A *weak* friend would be of little use to persons in our condition. But it is considered a great thing to have a *powerful* friend. David had a powerful friend in Jonathan, who so often saved his life, when his father tried to kill David. But the Lord Jesus is a more powerful Friend than he was. The poor cripple at Bethesda had many *acquaintances* there, but the Lord Jesus was his only powerful Friend.

Yes! He is *able* to help poor sinners, "able to save to the uttermost." Their salvation is a difficult work, but He is able to accomplish it. "All power (He tells us) is given Him in heaven and in earth." The renewing of the heart is a hard thing, as hard as to change the Ethiopian's skin, or the leopard's spots: and yet Christ promises, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh"—But the *whole* of Christ's power will not be known, till all His sheep shall be gathered into the heavenly fold, and not one little lamb is wanting. Such a *powerful* Friend is the Lord Jesus!

2. But he is as *wise*, as *powerful*. He knows exactly what is *good* for you, and what is *bad* for you: and His wisdom will no more let Him give you the bad, than it will allow Him to keep back the good.

How often is a person perplexed what to do. Now the very best thing for him, would be, to go and ask some *wise* friend for his advice: and if he acts upon the advice he gets, he is less likely to do wrong.

Now from how *many* mistakes, my dear young friends, will the wisdom of Jesus deliver you, if He is your Friend! The older you grow, the more surely will you find that life is full of difficulties; and when any of these difficulties perplex the mind—it will assuredly be the greatest relief to carry the difficulty to Jesus.

3. But once more, Jesus is worthy to be your Friend, because He is a *faithful* Friend. In the xixth chapter of Revelations, and the 11th verse, this name is given him, "Faithful and True." You may trust Him, dear children: He will never deceive you. His friends and his enemies will alike find, that He is "Faithful and True." Therefore you may rely on Him at all times, even when the cloud is darkest, and the night of affliction longest. I am reminded of the answer given by a little boy in a storm at sea, to a person who

asked him if he was not afraid? The ship was almost a wreck, and the rest were greatly alarmed, but yet this little boy replied—"No! I am not afraid, for *my Father's* at the helm." Here is a lesson to every Christian. He should learn to say—"Though my ark is tossed, though my trials are many, though my danger is great, yet *my Friend is at the helm.* I will trust and not be afraid."

Is not Jesus then, worthy to be your Friend? Is He not a *powerful* Friend, a *wise* Friend, and a *faithful* Friend.

Thus I have given you five reasons why you should obey the precept in the text, "Thine own Friend and thy father's Friend forsake not."

1. Because you are so young.
2. Because there are so many dangers.
3. Because of the misery of not doing so.
4. Because of the happiness of all who do: and
5. Because of the worthiness of the Lord Jesus to be your Friend.

And now that you have heard my reasons—let me reply to a question which I fancy I hear some little child ask—"How do we know that this great and mighty Saviour will allow such little things as we are, to call Him our Friend?"

This is a very natural and proper question, for if He were to *refuse* to allow you, I might as well hold my tongue.

But God's holy word teaches you that Christ *will* allow you to call Him your Friend. He proclaims His love for children. Look at the text, "Thine own Friend,"—it says. And it was foretold of Him by Isaiah, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and carry the lambs in His bosom." And so, while He was on earth, how sharply did He rebuke His disciples, and command them—"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." And again, He gave to Peter the special charge "feed my lambs."

Now He would never have said all these encouraging things, if He had not been willing to be your Friend: so that you may be quite sure, from Christ's words and conduct, that He *does* care for you, young as you are, that He *does* notice you, and that He *is* willing to be your Friend.

But remember, there must be *two* parties to form a friendship. In Proverbs xviii, 24, it is written, "A man that hath friends, must show himself friendly." I have shown you that Jesus is willing to be your Friend, but will you "show yourselves friendly?" Hath He shown Himself friendly to you? Then will *you* show yourselves friendly to *Him?* Will you henceforth treat *Him* as if you loved Him, and wished to please Him, and to be like Him, and were afraid to grieve Him?

Now, dear children, what is your answer to this question?

Do not answer—"Yes, I will *by and bye;* when I am older and have got more time." That was not my question. *By and bye* will not do for any work that is really important. Will you make Jesus your Friend now? Do not answer—"Yes, but I must have *other* friends too! I like religion, but I should not like to give up the world, and the gay companions, and the nice pleasures, with which it supplies me." Neither was that my question. But will you make the Lord Jesus your Friend, supremely and only? May God give you grace to reply with Peter—"Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee."

I have now only a few words more to add, in answer to one or two questions which may naturally have arisen in your minds. And

1. Some one will (I hope) ask, "*How* am I to make Jesus my Friend?"

I shall answer this question by another. You know what Saint James said of Abraham. "He was called *the friend of God.*" If *he* was *God's* Friend, of course God was *his* Friend. Now how did Abraham get into God's friendship? You have his history—you are told his character—and you are urged to follow his example. "Abraham

believed God." By faith in God's promise he looked to Christ as his Friend. "He rejoiced to see Christ's day, and he saw it and was glad." And Christ, who was Abraham's friend all his life on earth, at length summoned him—friend, "go up higher:"—and if *you* follow the steps of faithful Abraham, you shall "sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God." But

2. Others of you will ask, "How are we to show that He is our Friend and we His?" And *this* question I shall answer by another. Look at that clock. Is it going? How does it show that it is going? You cannot see the wheels within, but the *hands* are moving. So you cannot show us your *hearts*, but you can show that you love Jesus, *by your lives*. Let your *actions* speak. This is what He requires. "Ye are my friends, *if ye do whatsoever I command you*." Yes—let your light shine before men, and though it be but a little light, like the twinkling of a star, it will be a clear proof to all that see it, that you have been with Jesus.

But I have still one more question to answer. Some of you will remind me, thirdly, that the text says, "*Forsake* not," and you will ask, "How are we to *persevere* in His friendship?"

Just in the same way that you must persevere in any other friendship. You know what treat-

ment would grieve any other friend. The same will offend Christ. Do not disobey Him. Do not sin against Him. Avoid all that He tells you is offensive to Him. Let Him never have occasion to reproach you, as Abraham reproached Hushai—"Is *this* thy kindness to thy friend?" But by your esteem for His word, His day, His ordinances, His people, let it be your aim to persevere in His friendship through life and in death: so that in that appointed day, when God shall "judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained," Christ may say of you, what He once said of another of His friends, —"Our friend sleepeth, but I go to awaken him out of sleep." Oh! how will some of you then wish that you had made Jesus your Friend here. You will learn (but alas! too late) that a man may do without many other things in the day of judgment, but he *cannot* do without a Friend.

I have hitherto been speaking to the *children*. Let me now add a few words to *you*, their Parents.

My text, as you have heard, is a special summons to *them;* but, my friends, it has also a solemn charge for you. "*Thine own* friend"—it says to them—but that is not all it says—"Thy FATHER'S friend" it adds.

Consider then, I beseech you, how far *your*

characters as parents, agree with this description. *Is* Jesus your children's friend? And is He not their *Parents'* friend? What a loud call does the text give to every father and mother, as well as to every child—to "count all things but loss for Christ."

I trust there are some pious parents here! To such I would say, let your children see that Jesus is your Friend. It is written, "Enoch walked with God and begat sons and daughters." He trained up a family, and yet he walked with God. Even so let your families see that you walk with God; and esteem the friendship of Jesus dearer than the dearest tie. There are many suggestions I might make to you, if I had time: but there is one way of instructing your children, which is all I can mention, and which I regard as of more importance than any other: and that is the way of *personal holiness.* If you wish *them* to serve God, you must be careful to serve Him yourselves! Your *lives* will speak to them more powerfully than your *lips.* Let your own characters be "epistles of Christ, known and read of all men." See that you yourselves are "growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Look to it that there is daily less of earth, and more of heaven about

your religion: and in the day of judgment, if not before, your children shall assuredly rise up to call you blessed—and testify to an assembled world, that they owe their salvation (under God the Holy Ghost) to the manly piety of a devout father, or the bright example of a Christian mother.

But is there a careless parent here? My friend —how can we urge your little ones, "Thy *father's* Friend forsake not?" Surely in your present state of mind, you *dare* not delude yourself with the hope that Christ is your *Friend.* No! He must change His very nature, ere He can become a Friend to sin. "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" Unto the wicked God saith—"What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" To all such, Christ at His coming will say, "I know you not!" Banish then your vain confidence. "Cast away from you all your transgressions and make you a new heart and a new spirit."

But perhaps you will be candid enough to admit, that you indulge no hope about the matter: but confess that you have *not* sought the Lord, nor regarded in your heart the love of this heavenly Friend.

it himself. If he wishes his child to take pleasure in the house of God, he must frequent the house of God himself. All the words in the world will avail nothing, if your actions are contrary to them. So again, let family religion be cultivated. Keep yourselves and your children from bad and idle company. Suffer them on no account to go to fairs, races, or to any place of idle resort, or riotous pleasure; but live by the apostle's rule—"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Parents—it is a fearful thing to have a child in hell—but it is a blessed thing to have a child in heaven. Let what has now been said, lead you to serious reflection, and earnest prayer: that so in the "great and terrible day of the Lord," when you must give account of your stewardship to the same Judge who once called old Eli to account for his easy, goodnatured, but sinful, leniency to his children, you and they and we your ministers, may all rejoice together, and partake eternally of the friendship of that blessed Saviour, in whose name I have desired to urge your little ones this day,—"*Thine own* Friend, and *thy father's* Friend, forsake not."

PAWSEY, PRINTER, IPSWICH.

" THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP."

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF WORCESTER,

AT THE GENERAL ORDINATION HELD BY

THE LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

ON TRINITY SUNDAY, 1845.

BY THE

REV. W. H. HAVERGAL, M.A.;

RECTOR OF ST. NICHOLAS, WORCESTER.

" As to the subject of the sermon, it is required that it relate to this occasion: for nothing is more comely or more profitable than '*a word spoken in season.*' It is very fit, at this time, to instruct the candidates in the several parts of their duty, and the nature of their office, that they may weigh and consider well the great charge they are about to undertake."
—DEAN COMBER ON THE ORDINATION SERVICE.

WORCESTER:
CHILD; EATON AND SON; AND STRATFORD.

1845.

Published in compliance with the earnest wishes of many of the candidates.

A SERMON.

JOHN x. 3.

"He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

THESE words are a part of our Lord's description of a shepherd who is not a hireling. The entire discourse is one of the gospels, which our church has discreetly appointed to be read at the ordering of her priests. The occasion of the discourse was this:—The Jewish authorities had questioned the right of the lowly Jesus to teach and to preach, because he had not sought for licence from them. Instead of engaging in any profitless parley, the despised preacher seized the axe, and laid it at the root of the tree. By a parable of singular beauty, he boldly left his cavillers to infer that, in spite of their official authority, they were but "hirelings," "thieves, and robbers," and not true shepherds of the Hebrew sheep. Himself, he startlingly said, was "the door of the sheep." Unless, therefore, men entered the sheepfold by that door (*i. e*, by virtue of a holy faith in him, and of a spiritual union to him), they were not genuine shepherds, but "grievous wolves."

Thus our divine Teacher would have us understand, that, for the *perfection* of the Christian ministry, spiritual qualification is as essential as official appointment. This doctrine our blessedly reformed church holds firmly, and teaches plainly.

In pourtraying the character of a spiritual pastor, our Lord refers to sundry customs, which, though not common among us, are still familiar to shepherds in eastern climes. Two of those customs are named in our text. They can hardly be misunderstood by those students of the New Testament to whom the present discourse will be especially addressed.

Beloved, your position, at this present, is as solemn, as interesting, as affecting as the worth of souls and the verities of eternity can make it. You are waiting for authority, either to advance to the inner sheepfold, or to minister at its portal. Labour and responsibility are before you: endless honour or endless shame will inevitably follow you. In this your expectancy, many eyes are upon you; and many hearts, I trust, are lifted up for you. I pray you, therefore, to give earnest heed to such admonitory remarks as the text will justify, and a little practical experience can recommend.

The faithful and good shepherd, then, whom our Lord describes, "calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

I. "*He calleth his sheep by name.*"

This custom of the oriental shepherd implies knowledge and tenderness; because sheep, to be called by distinctive names, must be well known; and the use of such names is

always associated with somewhat of the fond, the gentle, the kind.

1. One of the first duties of the spiritual pastor is, to become acquainted with his flock. "I know my sheep, and am known of mine," is what we, after the pattern of the great Shepherd, should be able to say. In large and busy districts, such knowledge is very difficult; but if, under any circumstances, we make our pulpit our only watch-tower, and the pews of our church our only field of observation, we can never be well-informed as to the real state of our flocks. Apart from all the forms of more polished society, there should be, after the manner of St. Paul, in Asia, the domestic visit, the teaching "from house to house*."

Suffer me, my dear younger brethren, to apprize you that advantage must be taken of time and season for knowing your flocks. When sickness, bereavement, "or any other adversity" has befallen them, you will generally find an easier access to minds which, "in health and wealth," had closed the avenues of intercourse. Wait not to be sent for, when afflictions, which are always lying in ambush, have overtaken any of your people. Your ready proffer of pastoral sympathy, counsel, or prayer, will be the more acceptable, and the more deeply impressive.

And here let me advise you not to spurn opportunities of knowing even those in your parish who do not conform to our com-

* Acts xx. 20.

munion. Discretion will define your measure of intercourse with such individuals: but never let a cold or impolitic demeanour provoke their antipathy, or rivet their dissent. Possibly they will have much claim on your pity; for their separation may have been occasioned by some of those causes which every sound churchman deplores. At all events, therefore, stand not aloof from any "over whom the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." Their refusal of your oversight should only urge you to greater affection, greater patience, and a greater vigilance to minister to them in private, that you may the sooner win them back to your fold.

Especially let me advise you to know *the lambs* of your flock. O call *all* of *them* by name! They will soon love you, and listen to you; and, in after-life, remember you as the guide of their happiest days. Such remembrance has, I well know, not only been productive of the most beneficial effects, but has led to some of the most refreshing incidents in the life of the spiritual pastor.

2. Coupled with a knowledge of your flock, let there be a kind and gentle manner towards them. Such manner is peculiarly becoming in younger pastors. It is sure to be appreciated by even the most rugged tempers, and will generally be responded to by cheerful attention and ready obedience. Expect to meet with little roughnesses; but let your preparation for them be "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." His endurance of "contradiction" will, if remembered

aright, be a pole-star to guide us through any altercation which the malice of Satan or the infirmity of men may raise around us.

Whether, therefore, you wish to reprove or advise, dissuade or exhort, be assured of finding much valuable truth in the maxim of one who, in India and Persia, laboured much for God, viz., "*The power of gentleness is irresistible**."

Armed with that power, the discreet pastor can paralyze banded opponents, and disperse the dissolute and the excited, when opposite means entirely fail. It was the power of St. Paul among the besotted Thessalonians. "We were *gentle* among you" (he reminded them), "even as a nurse cherisheth her children†." In a word, let the proverbial tenderness of the shepherd be the rule of your demeanour. It will adorn your faith, and facilitate your work. It will encourage the trembling penitent, and awe the cavilling sinner. Altogether, it will enable you to resemble him, whose heart was meekness, and whose lips were grace.

Allied to tenderness towards your flock, let there be "*fervent charity*" towards each brother shepherd. You are entering the church at an excited and a boding period. Every where around us are "great thoughts of heart." It is impossible to look with apathy at those things which are coming upon us. Hence, we shall do well to stand in an even phalanx, and with an united spirit. Give, therefore, the hand of fellowship wherever

* Henry Martyn.
† 1 Thess. ii. 7.

you can. Be friends with all good and earnest men. Think not of little varieties, but look at sterling excellences. The day may come, sooner than we suspect, when, as ministers of our church, we shall need the truest affection for one another, and that resolute union which alone, by God's grace, can prove a tower of strength.

The other custom of the oriental shepherd, by allusion to which our Lord, in the words of the text, pourtrays the spiritual pastor, is this:

II. "*He leadeth out his sheep.*"

The sheep, after being safely folded for the night, were *led* out (not *driven* out) by the shepherd; who walked before them, and conducted them to "green pastures," or "still waters." Applied to the spiritual shepherd, this custom intimates that he is duly to feed his flock, practically to set them an example, and vigilantly to guard them from danger.

"And who is sufficient for these things?" No mere man is, or ever was. What, then, shall *we* do? There is but one alternative. Let us be meekly sensible of our unworthiness and inability: let us be diligent in prayer and study, and make the eternal Spirit our strength, and then our insufficiency will be crowned by the sufficiency of God*.

1. *We are duly to feed our flocks.* And how shall we best do this? There are two ways marked out for us by the word of God, and charged upon us by the church; viz., holy worship, and faithful preaching.

(1). The ordinances of our Saviour Christ,

* 2 Cor. iii. 5.

as existing in his holy catholic church, are the pasture-fields of his spiritual sheep. His worship and his sacraments are gracious institutions. To them, it is your part earnestly to call your people, and carefully to lead them through the same. It is our privilege to minister with formularies which, even our dissentients themselves being judges, have as little imperfection as any known compositions of their kind. The majestic simplicity, the chastened fervour, and, above all, the heavenly piety of those formularies, demand your deepest, your devoutest attention. In every ministration, therefore, aim at true earnestness and genuine devotion. The very aim will profit yourselves and animate your people.

Beware of descending to that low, earthly, romanistic notion which regards, or *seems* to regard, exercise of body more than fervency of spirit, and little ceremonies more than lively worship. Take, rather, the high and invigorating position of our protestant church, viz., *the doing all things "decently and in order,"* but esteeming the communion of the soul with its God infinitely more important than the nicest ritual observance.

Shun, too, the arrogant conceit of ministerial mediatorship in the liturgy of the church. That liturgy is not a manual of mediation, but a book of common prayer—of prayer common to all parties, the minister as well as the people. So carefully is this fact wrought up in the very frame-work of that most beautiful book, that the wonder is how any honest mind can mistake it. No where is there the slightest trace of an appeal from

the people to the priest as a mediator. They say not to him, "Sir, pray for a blessing*!" but he repeatedly says to them, "Let US pray!"

(2). In leading out our sheep to the stated pasture-field of holy worship, we are required also to feed them by the faithful preaching of Christ's holy gospel. "Go," said the angel to the apostles—"go, stand and speak in the temple to the people, all the words of *this life*†."

Without preaching, or an oral exposition of God's lively truth, there never was any great revival of piety in either the Jewish or the Christian church. And no marvel, seeing that always, and especially since the day of Pentecost, the gospel of Christ has been "the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth‡." To the end of time it will be an irresistible and an encouraging fact, that "it pleaseth God by the foolishness" (*i. e.*, the *humanly accounted* foolishness) of preaching to save them that believe§."

And *what* shall we preach? Exactly that which the apostles, priests, and deacons of the first days of the church constantly preached, and which their successors, the martyred or persecuted fathers of our own church, desired us to preach. With one voice, though taking St. Paul as chief speaker, they all exclaim, "We preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED‖!" Then let *us* habitually preach Christ as "the end of the law for righteous-

* Roman Breviary. † Acts v. 20.
‡ Rom. i. 15, 16. § 1 Cor. i. 21.
‖ 1 Cor. i. 23.

ness" to every contrite believer, Christ as the source of sanctification through the Spirit, Christ as the all-in-all of the sinner, the helpless, the miserable, the broken-hearted sinner.

The sheep of Christ, dear brethren, must be fed with that soul-nurturing food, the body and blood of their Shepherd. Any thing substituted for that, their proper nutriment, will only distemper or deaden them. "The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep*." The *doctrine* of this wondrous and affecting fact, as well as the sacramental symbols of it, must form the staple food of the flock.

But, beloved, in preaching Christ crucified, be not content with a mere exhibition of the doctrine, however lucid or truthful. You must study to convey it to "the bosom and the business of every man." You will have to apply it in a great variety of ways, for it is medicine as well as food. Consequently, you will have so to mould this one comprehensive truth as to prepare it for every man's conscience, whether for exhortation, counsel, or comfort.

And here suffer me, in this excited and unsteady day, to urge you to drop all comparisons between prayers and preaching. Neither make, nor countenance, any remarks to the disparagement of either. Set forth both exercises in their true and proper light. Encourage neither the formalist nor the flippant. Should the one speak of prayers as all-sufficient, declare the necessity of preaching; and should the other allude to preaching as

* John x. 11.

the chief object of interest, assert the bounden duty of common prayer.

In the selection of subjects for your discourses, you will, I am sure, do well, as often as practicable, to derive them from such portions of holy writ as are read in time of service. The practice will encourage your flocks to listen with lively interest to the reading of psalms, lessons, and other scriptures, as well as prove to those flocks that their pastors are thoughtful churchmen.

The leading out of sheep next implies that—

2. *We are to set our people a holy example.* As the shepherd of the east calmly walks before his sheep, so the spiritual pastor is to walk holily and unblameably before his flock. That flock is to follow him as he follows Christ; for Christ hath left both ministers and people "an example that they should follow his steps*."

How *reasonable* it is for the minister to be a pattern to his people, is easy to be comprehended. How *important* such a pattern must always be, we can never too vividly recollect. The minister of a parish is emphatically the parson, *i. e.*, *the chief person* of that parish. All eyes are upon him: his conduct will be noticed. The complexion, so to speak, of that conduct will necessarily give a shade to the conduct of his people. The words of the Holy Ghost will, in a sense, be verified: "As with the priest, so with the people†."

The young pastor, therefore, must look well

* 1 Pet. ii. 21.

† Isai. xxiv. 2.; Hosea iv. 9.

to all his ways. His people will be observant of them. Should they see in him a worldly conversation, or an open, or even a covert, adhesion to earthly things, the bad among their number will be encouraged, and the good deeply grieved. No merely official correctness can be a substitute for personal consistency. A clergyman who stakes his claim to respect mainly upon the fact of his ordination, is not worthy of the name he bears. Christ may not leave the verbal and sacramental ministrations of such a man void of efficacy to his faithful ones; but upon the man himself there hangs a curse of unprofitableness, a doom of endless desolation*.

Let, therefore, every young man who enters the church be careful *not to linger on the verge of worldly conformity*†. His severance from it should be decided and complete. At his ordination he becomes *at once* a minister of Christ. He should, therefore, cease *at once* from the world, and from whatever good men, in all ages, have accounted worldly. Hence, midnight amusements, or boisterous diversions, or scenic displayings, will present no attractions to that pastor who fears to offend the weakest of his flock, and who is mindful of that solemn account which will be exacted of him in the last great day. In a word, the young minister of Christ Jesus can hardly be too sensitive on the score of personal conduct. The world will tolerate his preaching as an angel, if he will but live as a hireling. The calm eloquence of a holy life is that appeal

* Art. xxvi.
† Rom. xii. 2.

to the conscience which worldly minds can least endure. By such eloquence the youngest and most diffident pastor may speak loudly for his Saviour. Holiness will give him a dignity beyond his years. "Let no man" (said one who well knew this fact), "let no man despise thy *youth;* but be thou an *example* of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*."

In addition, the leading out of sheep implies, that—

3. *We are to protect our people from spiritual dangers.* The eastern shepherd carried with him both rod and staff, that no evil beast might worry his flock. While they were following or feeding, he was looking around and watching. Thus we, brethren, are "set for the defence of the gospel" and the protection of souls. If we espy pernicious opinions or dangerous practices prowling about our field or fold, we are to warn our sheep against them. If, after our faithful warning, those sheep shall court destruction, their blood will not be on our heads†. How distressingly such opinions and such practices have, of late, beset our church, the heart of every sound Christian has felt. Whether those evils have fled outright, or retired only to muster force for renewed assaults, our duty is plain. We are to avoid all tampering with them, and to be increasingly earnest in promoting peace on the basis of truth. But, inasmuch as no reasonable man doubts the near approach of either very critical

* 1 Tim. iv. 12.

† Ezek. xxxiii. 5.

times, or the end itself of present times, our attitude should be that of prayer and watchfulness. That "perilous times" are come, and that many are giving heed to "seducing spirits," and that the very spirit of the great apostacy is flapping its dark wings in hope of triumph, cannot, without infatuation, be denied. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things" (said Paul the aged to Timothy the young), "thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ*."

But, in banishing "erroneous and strange doctrines," whether papal or pelagian, it is well for young preachers to be as little controversial as possible. The elucidation and enforcement of truth should constitute their chief study. Would the shepherd have his sheep withdraw from poisonous pastures or injurious associates? his object will be best achieved by setting before them ample store of wholesome provender, and exhibiting to them a safe and quiet fold.

In all cases, however, study, my dear younger brethren, to *lead* your people, and not to *drive* them. That shepherd who, through fond conceit, or private interpretation, or feverish conscience, divides and disperses his flock, must eventually suffer the keenest self-reproach, even should he escape that woe which God, by Jeremiah, has denounced against the pastors who do such things†.

* 1 Tim. iv. 6.
† Jer. xxiii. 1, 2.

In fine, if we would lead out our sheep aright, and successfully labour for them, we must daily seek the supply of the Spirit of the great Shepherd. That supply is the sole spring of all strength, and the real secret of all usefulness. It must be sought by fervent and untiring supplication—by such supplication as entwines itself with our very thoughts, and becomes habitual whenever we are about to enter any company, engage in any study, or fulfil any duty.

Finally, brethren, let us turn our tide of thought from the immediate future, to the present, and the *great* future. You are on the threshold of a service which, more than any thing in adult existence, will introduce you to the realities of eternity. You are about to stake your own souls, in taking charge of the souls of others*. If, through your negligence, the souls committed to your pastoral care shall die, "a horrible punishment," as you will presently hear, awaits you. If, through your willing ministry, they live, a crown of life, the fairest in all heaven, will be awarded you†. Then pause, and once again, even at this latest minute, glance at your motives for standing where you are. Your testimonials have been approved, and your examination has been successful; but, remember, *that is not all!* No ordaining officer can discern your spirit, nor any examiner search your heart. Your real character and your inward motives are known to the

* Heb. xiii. 17.
† 1 Pet. v. 4.

great Judge: they will be discussed at another tribunal.

Still, however, even at this present, you have yet to be asked a series of momentous questions. They are most carefully prepared by the church, as fences against hireling intruders. Be thankful for such stringent interrogations; because they are based on the most anxious charity for your own immortal interests: they are intended to spare you from insulting the eternal Spirit. O say not, in even its most mitigated sense, that "you *trust* you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost," unless you have pondered those words deeply, and prayed over them fervently. Better will it be to retire from this hallowed fane, than to stay in it and "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath." Better be an honest Nethinim, than a heartless Levite, or an unsanctified priest.

These things are said to you in consciousness of much affection, and in full belief of their propriety; because your bishop, after every documentary and relative testimony, has still, even at this extremest point, to appeal to one, and all in this congregation, respecting your fitness or unfitness for holy orders*.

* The anxiety of the church to prevent intrusion into holy orders is very remarkable. That anxiety, when the act of ordination approaches, becomes intense. After the utmost preliminary caution, the end is made as searching as though that caution itself needed revisal. Notwithstanding all that has been effected by documentary testimonials, and strict examinations, and personal questionings, and admonitory addresses, and even after the candidates, upon satisfac-

But, let no young man of humble faith and tender-heartedness be cast down. Only let him, from his inmost soul, look up, and, with trembling Peter, say, "Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee*!" then may he, with a good courage, undertake to feed the sheep of the Lord's pasture, and the lambs of his bosom.

And now, "good Christian people," let me admonish you to join heartily in our holy service. Lift up your prayer, with great earnestness, for those who are about to take upon them the most solemn of all offices. For this purpose you are supposed to be as-

---

tory investigation, have virtually received a promise of ordination, the church requires the entire process to be synthetically repeated in the house of God and in presence of the people. The reason for this repetition is not very occult. The whole preceding investigation has been, comparatively, in private; but, as the best appearances may be fallacious, a final appeal, *after a preparatory sermon*, is made to the heart and conscience of each candidate, in the very house of God, before the outspread table of the Lord, and the great congregation. Thus, if any thing has been omitted, it may now be supplied; or, if the heart and conscience of any candidate have not hitherto been faithful, opportunity is once more given for their honest exercise. Should no omission appear, or no candidate quietly withdraw, each individual is then left to God and his own soul. No excellency of human counsel can surpass this method of the church. It may have escaped modern observation, but it is one of our "good old paths." It is, in fact, the rule of the church; for a similar method is followed in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and in the solemnization of holy matrimony.

* John xxi. 17.

sembled, and not for curious gazing. In your respective localities obey the pastors who are set over you; pray for them, and "esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake." Take heed of being as sheep gone astray, lest the roaring lion come upon you unawares, and tear you in pieces, when there is none to deliver. Return to the Shepherd and Bishop of souls. Abide in him: so, when he shall appear, you shall be gathered into his heavenly fold.

LONDON:
Printed by Joseph Rogerson, 24, Norfolk-street, Strand.

THE REASONABLENESS AND NECESSITY OF ACTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH:

A SERMON,

PREACHED

TO THE TEACHERS OF THE LEIGH, BEDFORD, AND WESTLEIGH SUNDAY SCHOOLS,

On the Feast of the Circumcision,

BY THE REV. JAMES IRVINE, M.A.,
Vicar of Leigh.

Will you give faithful diligence always to minister the doctrine and Sacraments, and *the discipline* of CHRIST, as the LORD hath commanded and this Church and realm hath received the same? * * * *

I will do so by the help of the LORD.

The Form and Manner of Ordaining Priests.

LONDON:
F. AND J. RIVINGTON.
MANCHESTER: SIMMS AND DINHAM.
1845.

Manchester:
Printed by Charles Simms and Co.

A SERMON, &c.

I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.—
1 Cor. x. 15.

Under a painful persuasion that the most faithful preaching will prove, in a great measure, fruitless, should the practice of the clergy, in matters of discipline, directly contradict it, it has been the endeavour of your pastor for some time to avoid, as far as possible, this sad inconsistency. It has been his study to act so as to show, that he really believes what he delivers from the pulpit, and sets forth in his private intercourse with his people, as the truth of God. Owing to the long prevalence of entire laxity; for every one, so far as the Church is concerned, has been allowed to do what seemed right in his own eyes; his attempts to act in accordance with the laws and principles of the Church have, it is well known, given, in some quarters, considerable offence. It would be no use trying to dissemble this fact. I fully expected that some offence would be taken; and I have reason to be thankful, that so few have appeared to feel themselves aggrieved, and that so many have practically admitted the reasonableness and necessity of the course which I have been led to pursue. Some of those who feel dissatisfied are so, I am persuaded, because they do not fully understand what is required of them as members of the Christian society, the Church. To make this more plain to them, and to render it easier for you to answer objections and satisfy enquiries, will be my present aim: and let me earnestly beseech your candid and patient attention, even though I may have to draw rather largely upon it.

I need scarcely say that proper officers and known rules are essential to the very existence of a society; and that the society may prosper it is necessary that the

officers should do their duty, and enforce on every member the observance of the rules or laws, taking care, at the same time, to keep them themselves.* Any breach of such rules or laws on the part of any member is always visited, in every well regulated society, with reproof, fine, or expulsion, according to the nature and degree of the offence. And no reasonable person can question the propriety and necessity of such proceedings. The man who should complain that he had been reproved, or fined, or even expelled, on good evidence, for breaking the rules or laws of the society to which he belonged, would find no one to heed his complaint. Every body would say, that he knew well when he entered it, that a breach of the rules would lead to punishment in some shape or other. And should the punishment be expulsion, he would never dream of asserting a claim to relief or any other benefit arising from the society. As little would he think of doing so after voluntarily withdrawing from it, whether he joined another society or not.

Now, let us apply this to our society, the Church. It has officers and rules or laws. Its officers are the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, who minister in virtue of a commission from CHRIST, the Head of the Church. And no one can be regarded as a lawful officer of this society, unless he has been duly appointed to his office. This is the plain teaching of our Church.† Indeed, unless some

* The penalty for the neglect of these rules on the part of the clergy is very serious. By a statute of Elizabeth, still in existence, and often prefixed to the Prayer Book, it is decreed, that if any clergyman wilfully fail to minister in strict conformity with the book of Common Prayer, he should be liable, for the first offence, to six months' imprisonment and the forfeiture of his living for one year; for the second offence, to one year's imprisonment and the entire forfeiture of his spiritual promotions: and that if he were found guilty again he should be subjected to perpetual imprisonment.

† It is evident unto all men diligently reading the holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in CHRIST'S Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority. And, therefore, to the intent that these orders may be con-

certain mode of appointment existed in the Church, in regard to its officers, how could its members know to whom they were to yield obedience, and to whom they were to look as their spiritual guides. (Hebrews xiii. 17.)

The laws of the Church, or rules for the conduct of its ministers and members, in some important parts of their duty, are found in what are called the Rubrics and Canons. Such of the Canons of 1603 as were not a repetition of previously existing laws are binding on the clergy only. The Rubrics and ancient Canons are binding also on the laity, *i. e.*, on the people or members of the Church. And they become amenable to them on their baptism; for then they are admitted members of the Church, and of course bound to obey its laws. But as those baptized in infancy are not then capable of choosing for themselves, the nature of the Christian's duties and privileges are pointed out to them when they come to years of discretion, which may be when they reach fifteen or sixteen years of age. It is then required of them to say, whether they will promise to live according to their baptismal engagements. If they desire to do so, the Bishop receives their solemn promise in the ordinance of Confirmation, and lays his hands on them and prays, that GOD would "defend them with His heavenly grace, that they may continue His for ever, and daily increase in His holy Spirit more and more, till they come unto His everlasting kingdom." It follows, as a plain matter of course, that he, who does not thus avow his purpose to continue CHRIST'S faithful servant and soldier, does practically renounce Christianity, and all interest in the Saviour of sinners.

To guard against this sad decision on the part of her young members, the Church has ordered, that every child shall be brought to the font with three sureties,* who are

tinued, and reverently used and esteemed in the Church of England, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal consecration or ordination.— *The Preface to the Form and Manner of making, ordaining, and consecrating of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.*

* There shall be for every male child to be baptized two Godfathers and one Godmother; and for every female one

to pledge themselves solemnly to see him brought up as a Christian, and taken to the Bishop for Confirmation as soon as he is qualified.* And till he is confirmed they are in a measure answerable for his conduct.

It is well known that this provision of the Church has been, in most places, defeated by the admission, to this most important trust, of persons notoriously wanting in attention to their own duties, and, therefore, certain to neglect utterly the promises and vows they make for others. Owing to this neglect the greater part of the children received into the Church in baptism grow up in ignorance and sin, and many of them in practical atheism. To arrest this downward progress in the way of destruction, I have, as you know, revived partially the Church's rule; requiring at least three respectable church-going persons to stand for each child, and performing the service publicly, that the sponsors may feel more strongly the weight of their obligations.† The rule of the Church which requires all the sponsors to be communicants is a very reasonable one;‡ for those only who are taking some heed to walk in the way of the LORD themselves, are likely to be careful to instil, or see instilled, right principles into the minds of children. And certainly the minister, were he even rigidly to insist on the observance of this rule, could not be blamed. Much less ought he to be blamed or looked upon as unreasonably strict when he makes, as I have done, a large abatement from the Church's requirements. Those who will not qualify

Godfather and two Godmothers.—*Rubric prefixed to the office for Public Baptism.*

* See the last exhortation in the office for Public Baptism.

† The people are to be admonished, that it is most convenient that Baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other Holy-days, when the most number of people come together. When there are children to be baptized, the parents shall give knowledge thereof overnight, or in the morning before the beginning of morning prayer, to the Curate. And then the Godfathers and Godmothers, and the people with the children, must be ready at the font, either immediately after the last lesson at morning prayer, or else immediately after the last lesson at evening prayer, *as the Curate by his discretion shall appoint.*—*Rubric prefixed to the office for Public Baptism.*

‡ Neither shall any person be admitted Godfather or Godmother to any child at christening or confirmation, before the said person so undertaking hath received the holy Communion.—29th *Canon.*

themselves for becoming sponsors, by at least attending regularly the house of GOD, have no ground to complain when their minister refuses to accept their suretyship. The facilities afforded for attending Church are so greatly increased, (the greater part of the seats being free on Sunday evening,)* that no one need absent himself because he cannot find a sitting. Even at the morning and afternoon services seats will easily be found by such as really love the habitation of GOD's house and the place where His honour dwelleth. And, therefore, notwithstanding some occasional incivility on the part of some pew-holders, there is no good excuse for those who neglect the public worship of their Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

The rule of the Church in regard to confirmation is this: "So soon as children are come to competent age and can say, in their mother tongue, the Creed, the LORD's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and also can answer to the other questions in the catechism, they shall be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed." After confirmation it is required that they shall be communicants. Indeed the Church distinctly requires all who are sixteen years of age and upwards to communicate, at least, three times a year; and the Churchwardens and Sidesmen are strictly enjoined to present to the Bishop or his Chancellor, within forty days after Easter, the names and surnames of all those who do not thus communicate.† The persons so presented are to be admonished to attend to their duty; and if admonition fail, they are to be excommunicated, cut off from the Christian society, and declared unfit for any Christian privilege. And what

* With the consent of the seat-holders, and the approbation of the Bishop, the sittings in the parish church are free on Sunday evenings, except those in the Atherton chapel; the pew in the north gallery, No. 4; those in the north aisle, Nos. 99 and 125; in the south aisle, Nos. 29 and 30; and in the nave, Nos. 57, 59, and 77.

† Every parishioner shall communicate, at the least, three times in the year, of which Easter to be one.—*Rubric at the end of the office for the Holy Communion*, the last paragraph but one. The Minister, Churchwardens, and assistants of every parish church and chapel, shall yearly, within forty days after Easter, exhibit to the Bishop or his Chancellor, the names and surnames of all the parishioners, as well men as women, which, being of the age of sixteen years, received not the Communion at Easter before.—112th *Canon*.

could be more reasonable than this proceeding? Surely those who, by coming to confirmation, say they mean to continue in the Church, and claim an interest in the SAVIOUR, ought to keep their promise and live accordingly; and should they fail to do so, what could be more just than that their conduct should be reported to the Bishop, the chief pastor of the Church, that he may correct and punish them according to his pledged and bounden duty.* Nothing can be more contrary to all the principles of justice, than that men and women who are not even trying to live as Christians, should yet have a right to all the privileges of the Church.† Nothing so unreasonable and unjust would be tolerated for a moment in any other society: and the most flourishing society would be broken up in a few months, were so general a neglect of its rules permitted. And what is the present state of the Church, mainly, owing to this sad neglect? Is it not notorious that few, comparatively, of those who hear the name of CHRIST, depart from iniquity? Is it not an undoubted fact, that almost every one does just what he pleases, being fully persuaded, that let his conduct be ever so bad, he will be treated in life, in

* Wilt thou correct and punish such as be unquiet, disobedient, and criminous, within your diocese, according to such authority as you have by GOD'S Word, and as to you shall be committed by the ordinance of this realm? I will do so by the help of God. — *The Consecration of Bishops.*

† It is the choice of parents whether they will bring their children to the baptismal font where they are pledged to that Church Catholic, in which CHRIST'S Ministers are officers. It is put to every man at confirmation, whether he will ratify this vow or not. Finally, every one may separate himself when he will from the Church's fellowship. How unreasonable would it be, that after willingly renouncing the system of our Church, slighting the office of her Ministers, and despising their persons, men should yet desire to participate in those ordinances which they have shewn that they contemn! In the Church there is no exclusive spirit, for she invites all men to partake the benefits of her system; there is no intolerance, for she asks no one to partake them save by his own desire. The exclusive spirit is with those, who, preferring to remain strangers to this system, would exclude such as embrace it from its advantages; and what can be less tolerant than to seek by vulgar abuse or public process to drive her ministers and people from peculiarities which they deem important. — *Church Courts and Church Discipline*, by Robert Isaac Wilberforce, M.A., Archdeacon of the East Riding and Canon of York, pp. 87, 88.

sickness, and in death, quite as well as the most faithful observer of the Church's laws? He feels sure of the only thing which most people care about, viz. Christian burial. Now, while the minister tells his people, by his treatment of notorious offenders, that it matters little after all how they live, the plainest, the most earnest, the most faithful, and affectionate preaching will do next to nothing. The small number of communicants in most parishes, the poor attendance at many churches, the general failure of Sunday-school instruction as any efficient means of training up young people in the ways of godliness, are all proofs that the Christian ministry is doing miserably little for the salvation of men's souls; and how can it be otherwise when it is contradicted and nullified by the admission of persons to stand as sponsors who, it is well known, are utterly godless, and by the practice of speaking of all the departed as men and women who had died in the LORD, however flagrant their lives may have been. It is quite fearful to think of the gross untruths which are said at most grave sides; and still more so to reflect on the awful mischief done thereby to the living. Who will give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, when their pastor tells them plainly, when burying their ungodly neighbours, that they can get to heaven without giving themselves so much trouble? Thousands and tens of thousands believe this soul-ruining lie — die with it in their right hand, and are lost for ever.

There are, no doubt, great difficulties connected with the burial of the dead. To depart in any way from the customary practice must give more or less pain to the relatives and friends of the deceased; and no clergyman would wound their feelings if he could honestly avoid doing so. The state of the law also on this head is most unsatisfactory. The recent decisions in the Arches' Court determine only one case out of several; and the justice of these decisions is very generally called in question. Indeed, they are believed by many to be directly at variance with the requirements of the Church in the Rubric prefixed to the office for Private Baptism, as well as with the practice and teaching of the early Church.* But, after making all due allowance for these

* "First let the Minister of the parish, (or in his absence, *any other lawful minister* that can be procured,) *with them that are present*, call upon God." This is the language of the

difficulties, it is not easy to conceive how the clergy and serious members of the Church have so long tolerated a practice so fatal to the success of the Christian ministry, and affording such manifest ground for the reproaches of the separatist.* Most urgent representations might surely

Rubric; and it is impossible that it can mean, that any of *them that are present* may be the *lawful Minister* required. "To infer from a permission given in cases of urgent necessity, and that, too, when all the parties concerned, though laymen, were yet members of the Church, that, therefore, a heretic or a schismatic may, without necessity, and acting in open defiance of the Church, merely by using the Scriptural form of baptism, confer the full privileges of the Church,—and that the clergy are bound to give their services in burying such a person, though not recognised, directly or indirectly, as a member, is certainly wrong in Christian theology, as attested by *the uniform practice of the Church in all ages*, however deficient the ecclesiastical laws of this country may now be in providing for such cases."—*Bishop of Llandaff's Charge for* 1842.

"I scruple not to affirm, that should such ever be the decision of any court, [this was before Escott's case was decided,] it will be contrary to the uniform doctrine of the primitive fathers, to the decrees of councils, to the whole stream of authorities respecting the effect of heretical and schismatical baptism."—*Bishop of Exeter's Charge*, 1842, p. 41.

* "The Parson at a funeral publicly thanking Almighty GOD, that he has taken unto himself the soul of his dear brother here departed, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to everlasting life, is another most awful delusion. The deceased may have been as wicked a wretch as ever existed. He may have been a self-murderer, and yet the same form must be used as for the most pious Christian. * * * The souls of the ignorant are, in too many cases, the tremendous price paid to keep up this soul-deluding and soul-ruining system."—*Dissenting Tract, circulated at Leigh.*

The above charge, though exaggerated and incorrectly stated, is substantially true. The Church never meant that any one should be buried as a Christian who was not in communion with her. "Every parishioner shall communicate *at least* three times in the year.—*Last paragraph but one of the Rubric at the end of the Communion Service.* This is the key to the discipline of the Church. Let Christian burial and every other Christian privilege be confined to communicants and their children, and then our ministrations will tell on the people and not till then. They are, under the existing system, notoriously ineffective. Among the 22,000 souls in this parish, there are not 500 communicants, and there is no reason to think the state of the neighbouring parishes is one whit better. The attendance at Church in six adjoining districts which could be named, with a population of about 27,000, is about 1,300, exclusive of children, though there are sittings for 7,500, fully one-

be made to our spiritual fathers, the Bishops, to use their influence with the Crown to allow the Convocation to meet and deliberate on this and other matters, deeply affecting their credit and the interests of the Church: or, if it should be thought dangerous to call the Convocation into active existence at the present crisis, the legislature might prohibit all the civil penalties at present attached to excommunication, and then we might safely carry out the Church's discipline when it affected only the spiritual privileges of the people. There is some ground to hope that this may be done; and that ere long a conscientious clergyman will not be liable to trouble, because he scruples, and most justly, perhaps even wholly refuses, to use the burial service over persons who never were duly admitted into the Church, or who, after their admission, have left it, or lived wholly unmindful of their Christian duties.

The persons who have a just claim to Christian burial may be divided into three classes:—

1. Infants and young children duly baptized:
2. Those who are being taught what they ought to know and believe to their soul's health, with a view to confirmation, in accordance with the pledges of their sponsors: and
3. Those who are communicants.

The second of these classes will comprehend the children of church-going people who attend public worship with their parents, and those who frequent some of our schools, whether their parents come to church or not. It will comprehend also such grown up persons as, sensible of their past neglect, wish to be admitted to confirmation, and put themselves in the way of being prepared for that ordinance. Those who cannot, in any proper sense, be said to be in the communion of the Church, are:—

1. Infants and others not duly baptized:
2. All those who, having been duly baptized, have

third of which are free; and in most of the places there is no symptom of improvement. There is surely need for a searching inquiry into these matters, accompanied by a giving up on the part of the Clergy and pious laity of every luxury, that the proceeds of their self-denial may be devoted to the reparation of the awful breaches in the walls of our Zion. Were this course adopted, it would be manifest that they were really concerned for the souls of their people and the good of their neighbours—a feeling which at present few give them credit for.

neglected confirmation, on reaching the years of discretion, or, if under that age, are not taken to church and taught, as their sponsors engaged they should be, the doctrines and principles of the church:* and

3. Those who, having been confirmed, are not communicants.

That these three classes have no just claim to any Christian privilege, whilst they continue in their present state, is so manifest, that no reasonable person can blame a Christian minister who looks upon them as practically excommunicated. Some of them may be, in the main, very worthy persons; yet, while they live in the wilful neglect of the known requirements of the Church, they cannot be numbered among her acknowledged members. And surely those who do not choose to have their infants baptized by a clergyman, ought not to complain if they are refused Christian burial. And were it denied to such as neglect to ratify their baptismal vow in confirmation, whether through their own perverseness or the inattention of their parents and sponsors, where would be the hardship or injustice? The former, who were bound to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD," and the latter, who were pledged to see this done, would both be grievously to blame, because they failed in their duty; but they would have no reasonable cause for dissatisfaction with their minister, for treating, as persons who had denied the faith, those whom they had suffered to grow up in a state of alienation from the Church. As little reason would there be to complain, were Christian burial refused to such as have notoriously withdrawn from the Church, or habitually absented themselves from her ordinances. About the right of such to Christian privileges there is no room to doubt. They may not be formally cut off from the Church by a direct sentence of excommunication, but they have practically cut themselves off; and to treat them as consistent members is to prostitute the privileges of the Church, and delude and ruin men's souls.†

* The sending of their children to sectarian schools, a practice not uncommon among persons professing to belong to the Church, is an evident withdrawing of them from that communion into which they had been received in their baptism.

† "There is something extremely fearful to the considerate

It has been my anxious desire to break, if possible, this fatal spell, and lead people to see that there is a difference between the righteous and the wicked; between those who have been duly received into the Church, and such as have not; and also between those who live in the communion of the Church, and such as have forsaken it. The discretion* given to the clergyman to take the corpse either into the Church, or directly to the grave, has enabled me to make this difference. And as it regards avowed infidels, I have thought it right, at all hazards, to refuse to use any service over them, allowing, of course, the common law right of interment in the church-yard. A grave service, however, is seldom

mind in the religious condition of the great mass of the Christian community. What multitudes are there who, by the courtesy of language, are called Churchmen, but who are not accustomed by any solemn act of their own to claim participation with their risen SAVIOUR, even if their open sins and avowed worldliness do not shew them to be enlisted in the ranks of His enemies! What is the course of their lives? They mix with us as friends and neighbours. We meet them in our streets; we talk to them in our market places. Custom or curiosity, rather than any desire of personal benefit, leads them sometimes to the house of GOD. But they do not even pretend to any intimate connexion with the Church, except in the negative particular, that they have not allied themselves to any hostile society: they were enrolled, indeed, during infancy in the Christian family, but of the ties and duties of its family union they have thought nothing. At length they die and are no more seen. Their dust is now to return to its native earth; and their friends think it essential that the Minister of CHRIST'S Church should give expression to their common thanks to GOD, for taking to him, 'the soul of this our dear brother here departed.' Now it is not the Church's intent that her words should be so employed. She has authorised no such vain hope. She never intended her solemn rites, like untempered mortar, to be a cement for the crumpling edifices of human deceit; to be satisfied without any shew of repentance and of holiness; to accept, as GOD'S servants, those who would not even profess to take on them His mild yoke and light burden. What is this but to say, that men may live GOD'S enemies, and yet after death be found to be His friends?" *Church Courts*, &c., pp. 175, 176.

* The Priest and Clerks meeting the corpse at the entrance of the church-yard, and going before it, either into the church or towards the grave, shall say or sing.—*Rubric prefixed to the office for the Burial of the Dead.* That this Rubric warrants the course now pursued at Leigh and at many other places has been admitted by the person who conducted the prosecution of the Rev. S. T. Escott.

required, because it is generally understood to be a virtual denial of Christian burial; and it is meant that it should be so, except in the case of infants who, through the neglect of their parents, have not been publicly received into the Church after private baptism. There is no question as to their title to Christian sepulture, though for an obvious reason their bodies are not taken into the Church. This had used to be the practice of the parish; and it has been thought right to revive it. So far as the exclusion of a corpse from the Church is concerned, my Diocesan has not questioned my right to use my discretion in this matter; and I have had both written and personal communications with him on the subject. I have understood that he thinks that the psalm and lesson should be read afterwards in the Church; and to this I have no objection, should the friends of the deceased wish me to do so.

I am aware it may be said, why should you act differently from most of your brethren in the ministry? why should you expose yourself to the charge of acting in a harsh and arbitrary manner, and with a want of consideration for the feelings and prejudices of others, when you might, by a more accommodating temper, secure general good will? Now I would make any personal sacrifice for the sake of standing well with those among whom I am appointed to labour; and I do not think that I have ever been backward to meet their wishes, when I could do so conscientiously. I would not willingly give offence to any one. I have no wish for singularity; but I will not shrink from singularity, nor hesitate to encounter reproach when there is occasion for either the one or the other. And this occasion I see in the utter hopelessness of doing any amount of good worth naming, so long as ungodly persons are admitted to stand sponsors, and the same burial service is said over the good and the bad, those who belong to the Church and those who have turned their backs upon it, or who never were brought within its pale. The amount of discipline which can be exercised, generally in strict conformity with the Canons and Rubrics, and always in the spirit of them, will tell eventually on the labours of any minister who acts honestly and with good temper and moderation. Such proceedings are manifestly so reasonable and so necessary, that persons of any degree of candour cannot take any lasting offence

at them. And those who are sensible of the mischievous influence which our present lax practice exercises over peoples' minds, generally making them hope for salvation without a godly, righteous, and sober life, will be thankful for any effort which promises to dispel so fatal a delusion.*

A deeply felt concern for the people of my charge has made me willing to encounter present reproach, and submit to considerable pecuniary loss; and I have no fear as to the ultimate results. Indeed, I am satisfied that those who now think ill of me, on account of what they call my strictness, will, in the end, fully justify me; and I look forward with confidence to the time, when they will wonder that they should have been so misled as to the motives and probable results of my proceedings. The people of my charge, generally, have too much good sense not to see, that I am acting lawfully and in accordance either with the express rules or the clear intentions of the Church; and also that my sole object is their good. Whether the change, which I expect to take place in the views and feelings of those among whom I am labouring, will be brought about soon or delayed for years, will depend very much on you. If you profit by your minister's labours, and let your profiting appear unto all men in the purity of your lives and the dutifulness of your conduct, you will so effectually commend religion as to bring both it and those who teach it into general estimation. The eloquence of your lives will effect much more than the most persuasive preaching; and those, who would never be won to CHRIST by any preacher, will be constrained by your conduct to own that GOD is with us — that our system is eminently calculated to make people happy here and fit them for glory hereafter—and that it will be their truest wisdom to cast in their lot among us. Men may cavil at the best arguments, and refuse to be convinced by the most conclusive reasoning; but there is no gainsaying the living example. A husband and wife who are mindful of their plighted vows; a dutiful son or daughter; a kind brother or sister; a band of

* These sentiments were distinctly avowed in a Visitation Sermon, preached before the Bishop and Clergy at Wigan, in the year 1841, and the usual thanks were unanimously offered to the preacher.

chaste and modest young women;* a company of sober-minded young men who flee youthful lusts; an obliging friend; a kind neighbour; an honest and respectful servant; these will, all in their several spheres, give an undeniable testimony to the excellence of a system which produces such excellent fruits.

Use, then, diligently the means of grace, that you may grow in every thing that is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. Be not easily discouraged, or shaken in your stedfastness, when called to bear a share in the reproach of your pastor. Marvel not, should the portion of CHRIST and His apostles be, in a measure, both yours and his. Whatever present appearances may be, never doubt of final success in a work which the LORD Himself is pledged to prosper. (Isaiah, lv. 10, 11.) Do not suffer yourselves to be prejudiced against either the Church or your minister, by any thing that is said or written against them. Mark, especially, those who cause divisions, whether in the Church or out of it, and carefully avoid them. In these days of rebellion against authority,—in these days, when persons, making great pretensions to piety, teach rebellion, and show how it may be successfully practised,—in these days of rebuke and blasphemy, we need to be doubly watchful, lest we should be led to drink into the spirit of the times, and thus peril our own souls and mar the work of the LORD. The disputes which now agitate the Church do not concern you, except to lament and avoid the bad spirit which they display. Keep to the great work of your own salvation, and to that in which you may help forward the salvation of others. Live in peace; be in charity with all men; and pray for the peace and prosperity of the Church, and the GOD of love and peace will be with you.

* The notion is almost universally prevalent, that marriage is a compensation for previous immorality. To correct this fearful evil, would it not be well to require invariably a previous notice, when a woman meant to come to return thanks *for the first time* for her safe deliverance? In this way the guilty would be very generally detected; and the reproof and exposure would have a most salutary effect on others. Even if, to avoid reproof and exposure, the guilty stayed away, the effect would be very much the same.

CHARLES SIMMS AND CO., PRINTERS, MANCHESTER.

THE RUBRICAL QUESTION PRACTICALLY AND APOLOGETICALLY CONSIDERED:

A SERMON,

PREACHED

IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF LEIGH, LANCASHIRE,

ON THE SUNDAY AFTER EASTER, 1845,

BY

THE REV. JAMES IRVINE, MA.,

Vicar.

"Till the Church's intentions are completely fulfilled as to her ritual, we do not know what the Church really is, or what she is capable of effecting." — *Bishop of London's Charge.*

"I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say." — 1 *Cor.* x. 15.

LONDON:

F. AND J. RIVINGTON.

MANCHESTER: SIMMS AND DINHAM.

1845.

MANCHESTER:
PRINTED BY CHARLES SIMMS AND CO.

A SERMON, &c.

ACTS, XXVIII. 17—20.

"And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain."

ST. PAUL had left the party with whom he had once been connected; he had believed in CHRIST, and taken him for the promised MESSIAH; he had treated the Gentile converts to Christianity as persons who, in the sight of GOD, stood on a perfect equality with the converted Jews. These were things which gave to his countrymen the most serious offence. They were literally mad against him; and on many occasions they actually sought to take away his life. After an absence of some years from Judea, he went up to Jerusalem, with alms and offerings for the benefit of his poor countrymen. While there, in compliance with the advice of the rest of the Apostles, he showed particular respect to the Jewish law; and went up with some other persons to purify himself in the temple, that thus he might convince his countrymen, both believers and unbelievers, that he was still a consistent Jew, though he had become a Christian. This concession did not, as it had been supposed it would, soften the people's prejudices. Like most concessions, it was utterly unavailing for the purpose intended. The Apostle had done what, in the eyes of his nation, was an unpardonable offence. The very sight of the man had, in consequence, become unbearable: and though his heart overflowed with love to *them, theirs were full* of bitterness towards him.

Some Jews from Asia, who had witnessed his zeal in preaching the gospel, and his generous treatment of the Gentile converts, set upon him, as he was worshipping quietly in the temple, and, raising a mob, laid hands on him, and cried out; "Men of Israel, help. This is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place; and further, he hath brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place." Now, there was no foundation whatever for this charge, except that he had been seen in company with a Gentile convert. In fact, the prejudices of his enemies were too deep to allow of their seeing truth through them. They, therefore, misunderstood both his conduct and his teaching; and, as a matter of course, so completely misrepresented them, on all occasions, as to leave in their statements hardly one grain of substantial truth. I am not mentioning the prejudices of the Jews as any real excuse for their conduct; but as accounting for the fact, that persons of known respectability, as doubtless the leading men among the Jews from Asia were, could yet give utterance to the most outrageous falsehoods.

The charge they made against St. Paul, in the words I have just quoted, had that effect on the multitude which his enemies wished it to have. "The whole city was moved, and the people ran together; and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple." The next step was an attempt to kill the Apostle; and certainly his life would have been sacrificed to the rage of the multitude, had not the chief captain, the commander of the Roman soldiers, interposed to prevent the murder, by running down with a party of soldiers, who rescued Paul from their hands. These soldiers conveyed the Apostle to a place of safety; and this deliverance from a violent death became the commencement of a two years' imprisonment, which ended in his being sent to Rome, in consequence of his appealing, from the unrighteous decision of his mean and truckling judge, to the Roman emperor. Concerning his voyage and journey to the imperial city I shall say nothing. They are abundantly fruitful in incidents, but they have no special bearing on our present object. On getting settled at Rome, the Apostle was anxious to set before his countrymen there the real cause of his appeal. He wished to do this to prevent their thinking ill of him, which he knew would be a most serious obstacle to the success of his ministry among them, when he should be at liberty to exercise it; or when they should come to him, either individually or in little companies, to hear about *Christ. With this* object in view, he "called," as we read in

the text, "the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans; who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." To this candid and dispassionate statement of the Apostle the men to whom he made it replied, with equal candour and moderation: "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to know what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against."

One almost marvels, that the unceasing calumnies, then heaped on the head of the Christians, had not perverted the minds of these Roman Jews. How they came to be so free from the prejudices of the Jews of Asia, — why the common Jews at Rome were so different from the same class at Jerusalem, are very curious questions; and I doubt not they might be made very interesting to you, had I now time to discuss them. There is no time, however, for such a purpose. I will, therefore, only simply say, that the Jews of Rome acted like sensible, candid, fair-dealing people; those at Jerusalem, like senseless and intolerant bigots, who have had, I fear it must be said, some modern imitators; men who have been too blinded by prejudice to seek successfully the guidance of truth and principle in the proceedings they have adopted. I have not, however, any apprehension, that you will suffer yourselves to be led away by such ill example; and I hope, that those among us who have, unhappily, partially followed it, will see cause to retrace their steps, and show their good feeling and good churchmanship by bearing with what at present they dislike, in the belief that use will, ere long, effectually reconcile them to it. As it regards the present congregation, I am persuaded you will imitate the Jews at Rome. You will hear with fairness what I have got to say to you, and you will depart quietly as they did; and in a kind and candid manner consider among yourselves, whether your minister is to be the servant of CHRIST or the servant of men; whether or not he is to obey the clearly expressed laws of your *Church* — pursue that course which has

hitherto been attended with good results; act as the pastor and friend of the poor as well as the rich; and be at liberty to promote any measure which promises to be for the general good. I certainly have the fullest confidence in the soundness of the principles on which I have been acting, because they are clearly those of the Church — principles which, when fully carried out, will promote present holiness, and lead to everlasting happiness; while, at the same time, they will secure to all their rights in this life: to the workman, the full share of the gain arising from his labour and kind treatment from his master; to the employer, the full amount of his claim for his time, his skill, and his capital; to the buyer, an honest article at a fair price; to the seller, a reasonable remuneration for his trouble; to men of rank and wealth, the security of their property and titles, with respect for their persons; and to those in humbler stations, a parental concern for their well being on the part of their superiors and masters; to parents, the reverential regard and affectionate attachment of their children; to children, the needful care, on the part of the parents, to train them up in the way they should go, and thus fit them, physically, mentally, and morally, for the duties and labours of after life; and to all classes and degrees of men, the full enjoyment of the advantages which must arise from the faithful following of our SAVIOUR'S golden rule: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

Perhaps it may be said, all these things are very good. We, who labour with our hands, wish only for fair dealing on the part of our employers; and we should value a pastor whose conduct showed that he took a real interest in our welfare; a man who would not be spending his time like a man of the world, when duty required him in the school, in the class-room, the church, the cottages of the poor, the abode of the sufferer, the house of mourning, and the chamber of the sick and dying. We, who are masters, wish only for a fair return of labour for our wages, and such respectful conduct from our workpeople as will enable us to maintain a friendly intercourse with them. From our pastor we desire only such a portion of his time and attention as is compatible with the due oversight of the thousands who especially need teaching, guidance, and friendly sympathy. We, who are parents and children, wish only for that dutiful submission and affectionate care which will *enable* us to live together in comfort and in peace; and we *are thankful when* our pastor labours to make us a blessing

to each other. And it will be, we admit, a most happy state of things, when all take pains to do their duty in that state of life in which GOD has placed them, and yet so pass through things temporal, as not to lose sight of those which are spiritual and eternal.

But what, it will perhaps be said, have the alterations in the service of the Church and the strictness about baptisms and burials, to do with the improvement of the people in temporal comfort and moral and religious conduct. Will not the man who meets the wishes of his parishioners, in such matters, be far more useful in his ministry than one who thwarts them, and resolutely holds to what he thinks right. An unbending temper in the minister will be met by an equally unyielding and perverse spirit in the people.

Now, I must say, that this is not a fair statement of the matter now at issue; though I have reason to believe it has been used against me with considerable effect; and it seems, at first sight, a very plausible view of the case. I am not at all surprised that many have been taken in by it, and that they have, in consequence, taken a part against their pastor which they would not otherwise have done. But is this the true state of the case? I am sure it is not; and this, I hope, I shall be able to show incontrovertibly. And here let me say, on all questions not expressly settled by the Church, either by direct command or clear inference, I am quite willing to yield to the wishes of those whom I am bound to conciliate, at any expense of honest concession or personal self-denial: and I am sure there is no personal sacrifice which I would not most gladly make to satisfy those who have taken offence at my conduct as their minister. I am not aware that I have ever contended, in any one thing, merely for my own will and way. On various occasions I have met portions of my parishioners on matters affecting the interests of the parish, and, as it will happen in such cases, a difference of opinion has sometimes arisen; but I do not think, that they will say I ever manifested any disposition to contend unreasonably for my own views. That I may have done unwise things — that I may sometimes have appeared to be wanting in deference to those whose feelings and wishes I am bound to consult, it would be the greatest presumption on my part to deny. I do not pretend to be faultless; but I do most solemnly declare, that I have never been intentionally wanting in deference to either rich or poor. I have never, so far as I am aware, acted hastily; and generally I have sought the best advice I could *procure before I engaged* in any important matters;

and, in every case, I have adopted that course which I thought would be most acceptable to my parishioners, and most likely to accomplish the object I had in view: and I think I may safely appeal to those who have acted with me in any work, whether I have not thankfully received their advice, and in many cases followed it. Such men have had an opportunity of judging whether I treated them like one who was self-sufficient and self-willed, and determined that every one should bend to his despotic temper; and I am quite willing to stand or fall by their decision.

I have dwelt the more on this point, because I believe this mistaken view of my character is at the bottom of all the opposition that has been raised against me; and I have no hesitation in saying, that if I were the person that some people take me to be, I should deserve to lose the confidence and affection of my parishioners. I am not thinking, however, that anything I can say now will have much present effect on those who think ill of me, or feel dissatisfied; but I do hope it may lead them, in time, to inquiry and calm consideration. And would they only view all things dispassionately, and believe that I never meant to give offence, or even thought anything I have done would have been a grievance, I am sure that our friendly intercourse would be speedily resumed, and the same kindly feelings would be entertained towards their pastor which he is conscious of having always cherished towards them.

The points for which I am now contending, and it must, unhappily, be owned, that there is a contest going on, are those which are plainly decided for me by the clearly expressed laws of the Church; and they are, as I believe, essential to the success of my ministry. Some of them, for example, godless persons standing as sponsors in baptism,* and the reading of the burial service over notoriously bad characters, or persons of whom I know nothing, because I have not been called to visit them in sickness, are things which no honest man can put up with. The fact that they have been so long tolerated fills me with astonishment and grief. Just consider for a moment how awfully profane it is to ask persons, whom you know to be thoroughly irreligious, to pledge themselves to GOD to see children brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life; and you know that every godfather and godmother is so pledged. Just hear

* The Church requires communicants as sponsors; (Canons xxix. and cxii.;) but to meet the necessities of the parish, regular *church-going* people have been accepted, except in cases of illegi*timate children.*

what is solemnly promised by every sponsor. "Dost thou," the priest is directed to ask; "Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?" And what is the reply given to this question? It is this: "I renounce them all." The sponsor further declares in the name of the child, that he "believes steadfastly all the articles of the Christian faith"; and that he "will obediently keep GOD'S holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life." These are surely solemn pledges; and they necessarily imply in those who give them some decent attention to regulate their own lives in accordance with them. Yet it is notorious, that the common practice requires no such qualification in sponsors. Men and women, well known to be living, not only in the neglect of the holy communion, but in that of public worship, are freely admitted to stand as godfathers and godmothers. Indeed, their being abandoned profligates is no bar, in most cases, to their admission to this most responsible trust. And it is to oblige your pastor to accept for sponsors such persons as these, that our Bishop has been memorialised. Yes, it is wished to compel him to enact in a retired corner of the church, very properly in the absence of the congregation, what I cannot but call a solemn farce; a thing which I had not been used to do in the parishes where I had previously laboured; a thing which the Church expressly forbids the people to seek; and a crying evil which I got rid of here at an early period of my ministry. I certainly cannot understand this proceeding. I could understand a prayer to dispense with sponsors altogether, and reduce the sacrament of baptism to a mere ceremony for giving children a Christian name, and thus consign the great body of them to practical Atheism, as appears to have been the former custom. But to retain the sponsorship and the binding of the sponsors, with all the solemnities of an oath, and yet dispense with even the lowest qualification for the discharge of the sponsor's office, is past my comprehension. The only parallel that I can find to such a proposal, (and it exists only in imagination,) is the formation of an association or company for the purpose of discounting bills, drawn and accepted by men of no property.

I am sure, Christian brethren, you would not wish me deliberately to take pledges which I know to be utterly worthless, and *allow* men and women awfully to perjure

themselves, and bring a load of guilt on their own heads and lasting disgrace on the Church. For has not our practice, in the matter of baptisms, been thrown in our teeth by our adversaries as scandalous and profane? Have we not been taunted with the fact, that we number among the Church's regenerate children, multitudes of thieves, drunkards, fornicators, and all kinds of vile persons and evil livers? This comes of our baptisms without proper sponsors; and then, to deepen our disgrace and proclaim our shame to the world, we bury these persons, generally without even the pretence of repentance on their part, so far as the clergyman knows; and with awful profanity we commit them "to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life;" a form of words which imply, at least, a reasonable hope that the deceased will have a part in that resurrection. Yet these words have been used again and again, though at the time of using them, looking at the past lives of many of those over whom they have been said, there was no ground whatever for indulging anything even approaching such a hope. Am I, then, to be blamed, my Christian brethren, for shrinking from the utterance of such gross and known untruths over the remains of men and women whose lives were notoriously spent in following the devices and desires of their own hearts? Am I to be blamed, because I am unwilling to keep up the fatal delusion, that people will be saved and get to heaven let their lives be ever so unchristian? I am sure there is no reasonable man or woman who would wish me to continue a practice so injurious to the living, and so entirely at variance with truth and honesty. In all cases of baptisms and burials where I have had to act in opposition to the wishes of any of my parishioners, I have endeavoured to treat them with kindness and consideration; and except where the applicants forgot the respect due to their pastor, I hope I have always succeeded. And even in the two or three instances where I have met with rudeness, I am not aware that I ever said anything harshly, or failed to show good temper and moderation. The reported conversations, said to have been held with me on such occasions, are greatly misrepresented; but as most of the reporters are tolerably well known, it is needless to attempt any exposure of their misrepresentations. Those who really know me will not be deceived by them; the candid will not believe them on *such* disreputable testimony; and as for those who wish to *blacken the character* of their pastor, it would be a waste of

time to endeavour to set them right. I am not denying the existence of the facts which gave rise to these conversations. I am not denying that something was said like some of the things reported to have been said. But there is a colouring — there are additions — there are misrepresentations, or at least serious, and, I fear, inexcusable misapprehensions. Perhaps some one will say, "We have only your word for the character of the reported conversations." Most true; and most people, I believe, will take my word in preference to that of persons evidently more or less prejudiced against me, because my conduct has given them personal offence. But you shall hear and judge for yourselves what dependance is to be placed on such reports. Many of you saw what took place on the first Sunday of this month, when I brought the bread and wine from the vestry, as the Bishop had directed, and nothing else. Many of you know, that up to that day no change had taken place in any part of the service since Easter, 1843. All the restorations were then made at once, after due notice. Now, I have here a report of what is alleged to have taken place on the day just named, with some other particulars; and this statement, brief as it is, contains ten distinct falsehoods. Those who were present on the occasion referred to, must at once perceive that I am stating no more than the truth. The reporter says: — "Hitherto the diocese of Chester has been undisturbed by those clerical vagaries which have brought Exeter and London into such undesirable notoriety. Although containing leviathan towns, such as Liverpool, Manchester, Bolton, Rochdale, &c., the clergy have, almost to a man, discarded the innovations which in other parts of the country have been introduced. The unanimity, however, which has up to the present time prevailed, is not to be of longer continuance. A leader has been found, and [he] will probably have some followers. It has been customary for some years, in the parish of Leigh, near Bolton, to allow the bread and wine [intended] to be used in the celebration of the Holy Communion to remain on the table during the performance of divine service, after which they have been consecrated by the priest, in the manner prescribed by the Rubric, in the presence of those who remained to partake of the sacrament. This common sense [but anti-rubrical] plan of proceeding has, after some years' observance, proved distasteful to Mr. Irvine, the Vicar. On Sunday se'nnight, Mr. Irvine performed the morning service, and it was noticed, that although the sacrament was to be administered on that day, *the elements* were not placed upon the table;

[nor had they been so for two years before.] On descending from the pulpit, Mr. Irvine repaired to the vestry-room, from which he shortly afterwards emerged, accompanied by his subordinates, bringing with them the plates, cups, bread, wine, &c. There had previously been some unmistakeable indications on Mr. Irvine's part to introduce innovations, and this fresh attempt met with the fate it deserved; the churchwardens and others took up their hats and forthwith left the church. During the last few days several meetings have been held, and a requisition has been prepared for presentation to the Bishop of Chester, praying that his Lordship will suspend Mr. Irvine from his clerical functions. The requisition has been signed by the Churchwardens and the principal inhabitants."

Now, to say nothing of the singular and noiseless unanimity of the Chester innovators, in adopting so generally and discarding so contemporaneously the alleged clerical vagaries, here is a fair sample of the way in which my conduct has been misrepresented. With the solitary exception of bringing the bread and wine from the vestry, in accordance with the express directions of the Bishop, the whole report is false from beginning to end. And this shamefully untrue statement a professedly religious newspaper copies and circulates, without inquiry, with a view to damage the character of a clergyman occupying an important position in the Church. Happily for me, its well known character for dishonesty will render anything it says very innocuous in most quarters; and certainly the good opinion of those who read such a vehicle of low scandal and vulgar abuse is not of much consequence to any one. It is only to be regretted, that the conductor of it does not lay aside the garb of religion, and put on a costume more in accordance with his apparent character and practices.

The charge, then, that I have treated harshly or uncourteously bereaved relatives, or thrown needless difficulties in the way of parents when they have sought to get their children baptised, is wholly untrue. As it regards the rites of Christian sepulture in all their integrity, I have never as yet refused them to *confirmed* persons, when I have had an opportunity of visiting them for any reasonable time before their death. In such cases I have raised no difficulty about the interment, however much I may have been dissatisfied with their preparation for another world. I have been most anxious to err on the side of charity *rather than on* that of strictness. The greater portion of *those whose* corpses have not been admitted into the

church, wilfully neglected to send for their pastor to visit them in sickness; and their relatives were parties to this neglect: yet both must have known that it was as much their duty to send for their minister as it was his to attend when sent for, and to bury all who die in the communion of the Church. Hear what the Rubric says on this subject; and it is both the law of the Church and of the land, and your attention and that of all your neighbours has been especially called to it. "When any person is sick, notice thereof shall be given to the minister of the parish." The neglect of this rule of the Church is surely practically saying to me; "We don't own you as our pastor; we want none of your services while we live." And I have no quarrel with those who say so. This is, thank God, a land of liberty. You may either use the services of CHRIST's ministers or reject them. There is no compulsion. I should be truly sorry to see such a thing attempted. But I put it to you, as reasonable people, to say whether, after refusing to own me as their pastor, men may turn round and say; "We will make you say that this man, of whom we took care you should know nothing, is a dear brother in the LORD, and one who is gone to rest in CHRIST:" "Nay, we will make you say so of him, though you knew he was a drunkard and a blasphemer, or otherwise a notorious ill liver, or an habitual or general neglecter of the ordinances of religion, and never gave any sign of true repentance." Now, this is the tyranny to which some wish to subject your pastor; and is it reasonable that he should be compelled to say, in such cases, what every body must know to be awfully untrue? I do not think you will say so, even though you should have read a recent attempt at defending this unchristian practice.

Several persons have died lately over whom it was impossible, with a shadow of honesty, to use the burial service. In all these cases, the friends of the deceased were satisfied with what I urged on the subject; and they met my wishes, and dispensed with the service. Among the poor I have always found a ready acquiescence in my reasonable desires; and I do believe there are very few persons in the parish who would wish me to do violence to my conscience, even in favour of their own relatives. The fact that other clergymen do, apparently without scruple, what I dare not do, places me, without doubt, in a most painful position. I think highly of many of my brethren in the ministry. I am persuaded that no Church can boast of such ministers as those which our own Church possesses; but I cannot see, in the great *body of them*, much of that spirit which, in

other times, made men confessors and martyrs. I see a great disposition to accommodate themselves to the circumstances of the times, and exercise their ministry with as little trouble as possible to themselves, and as little offence as may be to their ungodly or worldly minded parishioners. They are thus led to put the most unwarranted sense on the burial service, and to indulge hopes respecting the deceased, not because there is any assignable ground for hope, but because they must express a hope. No unprejudiced or uninterested person receives their interpretation of the service, or thinks them warranted, in multitudes of cases, in speaking as they do of the deceased. The separatist makes use of their conduct to prejudice serious and simple-minded persons against the Church; and thousands and tens of thousands are led by it to believe that there is salvation for every one, and that, in order to be happy hereafter, no godly, righteous, and sober life is necessary.* The same

* "There is something extremely fearful to the considerate mind in the religious condition of the great mass of the Christian community. What multitudes are there who, by the courtesy of language, are called Churchmen, but who are not accustomed by any solemn act of their own to claim participation with their risen SAVIOUR, even if their open sins and avowed worldliness do not shew them to be enlisted in the ranks of His enemies! What is the course of their lives? They mix with us as friends and neighbours. We meet them in our streets; we talk to them in our market places. Custom or curiosity, rather than any desire of personal benefit, leads them sometimes to the house of GOD. But they do not even pretend to any intimate connexion with the Church, except in the negative particular, that they have not allied themselves to any hostile society: they were enrolled, indeed, during infancy in the Christian family, but of the ties and duties of its family union they have thought nothing. At length they die and are no more seen. Their dust is now to return to its native earth; and their friends think it essential that the Minister of CHRIST'S Church should give expression to their common thanks to GOD, for taking to him, 'the soul of this our dear brother here departed.' Now it is not the Church's intent that her words should be so employed. She has authorised no such vain hope. She never intended her solemn rites, like untempered mortar, to be a cement for the crumbling edifices of human deceit; to be satisfied without any shew of repentance and of holiness; to accept, as GOD'S servants, those who would not even profess to take on them His mild yoke and light burden. What is this but to say, that men may live GOD'S enemies, and yet after death be found to be His friends?" — *Church Courts, &c.*, pp. 175, 176.

"Dissenters are daily publishing tracts, in which they object, that we declare all those whose bodies we inter in our churchyards *to be sure of* salvation. We quote from the last paper of the *kind which has* come in our way, — a broad sheet put out by a low

unwillingness to do any thing offensive to any portion of their charge leads many to accept any sort of persons to stand as sponsors for children; and in this way they, unhappily, prostitute a most important ordinance of the Church, and bring upon her indelible disgrace. As I have said again and again, I am simply anxious to wipe away this reproach; and I am especially desirous to dispel the awful delusion under which so many live and die. I have long hoped and wished to effect these objects here in quietness, and with the concurrence of all reasonable people; but should attempts be made to force me and coerce me to do what I must regard as sinful and mischievous, I must take such measures as will protect me from harassing and expensive prosecutions. This will be done with painful reluctance, for I have no wish to molest any one, or give any body the slightest trouble; and I do yet trust that the good sense of my parishioners, generally, will save me from any painful proceedings, So long as I am allowed in peace to take the corpse to the grave, in the case of those not *confirmed* or not visited by me or some other clergyman under my direction, and, in flagrant cases, to refuse the service altogether, I shall be content to let matters remain as they are; and if I should present any persons to the Bishop, agreeably to the canon, I shall not urge any proceedings to be taken against them so long as I am suffered to remain unmolested myself. There is surely nothing unamiable in this act of self de-

and ignorant schismatic, who, however, expresses the common feelings of his class. One of Thomas Gosling's reasons for being a Churchman is, 'because I seem sure of going to heaven if I die a Churchman. I went to the funeral of poor Dick Guzzle, who lived with another man's wife, and was neither very sober nor very honest, and I heard the vicar say, "Forasmuch as it hath pleased ALMIGHTY GOD of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed," &c., I thought, well, if poor Dick's safe, I need not be afraid, for I am sure he was a bad one.' Now, to this the answer is obvious, that it is never impossible that on their deathbed men may repent, [?] and that charitable hope cannot be unsuitable; but what answer can we allege to practical men, when they see that this hope is expressed in a manner not less contrary to our own laws than to their natural prejudices; *in a manner as calculated to mislead the guilty as to disgust the upright?* For are there not Canons by which such offenders [and those, too, who separate from the Church or neglect her ordinances] are sentenced to excommunication? and is not the use of the funeral service over persons excommunicated expressly forbidden? What answer, then, can be made to those who object that our use is, *de facto*, prejudicial, when we know, *de jure*, it is really inhibited." — *The English Review*, for April, 1845, *pp. 87, 89.*

fence. Much less is there any thing vindictive in a purpose to use merely for my own protection, in the discharge of a painful duty, the weapons put by the Church into my hands. As it regards the power of taking the corpse at once to the grave, the Rubric appears clear and decisive (and so far as the bodies of infants only privately baptized are concerned, it had used to be acted upon here:) "The priest and clerks meeting the corpse at the entrance of the churchyard, and going before it, either into the church or towards the grave, shall say or sing." It is not, I confess, without pain that I take advantage of this discretion;* and it will be a most happy day for the Church when her discipline is placed on such a footing as will cut off, even from nominal connexion with her, all persons who neglect her services or lead ungodly lives.

The other matters objected to, viz., the time for public baptisms, and a few restorations in the service, are all clearly in accordance with the Rubrics, as you yourselves must see by referring to your prayer books. Instead, however, of going over these Rubrics with you, one by one, I will use the Chancellor's reply to the Churchwardens on each of the articles of complaint, except that about the credence table, which has been removed. After some prefatory remarks, including this important sentence, "I do not see ground for instituting further proceedings in this case," the Chancellor says:

"I. You state, that 'the usual hymn at the commencement of the service is omitted, together with other changes in the psalmody.' I reply, that the arrangement of the psalmody rests with the minister; and, as the Rubric does not require a hymn at the commencement of the service, he is not bound to order it, and that the absence of the requirement seems to justify him in having discontinued it."

"II. 'The sermon is commenced immediately after the Nicene Creed, and without any prayer.' This is again at the option of the minister. Nothing is prescribed; and he will act in the way he may deem most conducive to

* The right to use this discretion the bishop has not questioned, and I have had both written and verbal communications with him on the subject.† As it regards notorious offenders and infidels, he has expressed his sympathy with me, and a hope that, ere long, some steps will be taken to relieve clergymen from their present painful position,—which is, liability to a prosecution, or the utterance of the most notorious and mischievous falsehoods.

† *This statement* the bishop has confirmed by a letter to the churchwardens, *dated* 24th April.

edification. The people, it is to be hoped, will not hastily condemn a practice merely because it is unusual."

"III. With regard to the surplice, it does not seem a matter of much consequence to the people..... I trust that those who censure the practice will remember it is merely a form." Here I must be allowed to beg you to notice how differently the Chancellor speaks of the surplice from the memorialists. They say, "It is only used by a class of clergymen who wish, by external symbols, to draw their flocks nearer Rome." He evidently entertains no such unfounded notion; and the character of the men in this county who have used it forbids such a preposterous supposition. The memorialists further say, "The use of the surplice during the sermon is not enjoined by the Church." And if they mean specifically enjoined, they are right; but, as the Church bids the priest go and preach the sermon, or read a homily in the course of a service, for which the surplice is enjoined, no one would think of laying it aside and putting on a gown without an express direction to that effect. In truth, the gown is no where enjoined in the Rubrics or canons as a ministering garment.* It is spoken of in a canon,

* The black gown is not an ecclesiastical vestment. It is fit for the preacher or evangelist, but not for the pastor. It is a presumption in any one but a member of a University to wear it; and no one who is not ought to wear it, any more than he would wear a military uniform. The office of the evangelist is to convert men by reasoning with those who have fallen away from their baptismal vows, and are no longer obedient to the voice of their pastor. He therefore wears the dress of the *doctor*—the learned reasoner. The pastor, however, addresses only those who know the shepherd's voice, and are obedient thereto; and as he speaks the voice of the Church to faith, he wears the dress the Church gives him. The difference of the dress marks the difference of the things to be done: but since the clergy now are ignorant of that difference, and under the term "Sermon," confound things wholly dissimilar in their nature, it would be extraordinary if they did not exhibit a corresponding ignorance respecting the vestment in which it is to be performed. Verily, the people need the preaching of the gown.—Henry Drummond: "*Abstract Principles of Revealed Religion*," p. 342.

After a careful examination of Ritualists, a writer in the *Christian Remembrancer*, who is no advocate for external uniformity, in the present low state of the Church, maintains that the surplice is the vestment in which the morning sermon should be preached. He then states how it came to be in many places disused. "The fact may be candidly admitted, that whatever the law was, and whatever its intention was, the *illegal* use of the gown in preaching the sermon, during the communion, arose from the encouragement *given to the licensed* and ambulatory preachers, whose *proper dress in which to preach their* sermons was a gown or priest's

to which I have been referred, as a part of the ordinary dress of the clergy; and though the memorialists have been so good as to say, that they have no desire to tie me down to the strict observance of that canon, [lxxiv.,] I take this opportunity of stating, that I am quite prepared to wear the garments therein ordered, when they can find a person who will make them, and certify that, having submitted them to the episcopal bench, they have been pronounced strictly canonical. So far as the surplice is concerned, I hope it may soon be generally used; and then there will be no room for regarding it as the symbol of any class; and in the mean time, I trust that those who do use it (and the number is not small who do so) will let it be seen, that they are men of meekness, patience, self denial, and disinterested and unwearied labours for the good of their people, — men who remember that it is written by an inspired apostle; "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry."

But suppose the priest were to preach the morning sermon in his gown, such a practice would be most inconvenient to the congregation; for, first, they must sit in silence till he goes to the vestry to effect the necessary change; next, they would have to do the same while he returned to the vestry, after the sermon, to put the gown off and put on the surplice. These inconveniences, to say nothing of the unseemly parade which would be thus occasioned, are all avoided by the use of that vestment, which is so symbolical both of the message to be delivered and of the effect to be produced by it. (Rev. xix. 8.) But to return to the Chancellor's letter. "On reading the offertory sentences," he says, "and the use of the prayer for the Church militant, I have spoken in my charge, and I consider them inexpedient where there is a sermon; but I cannot say they are

cloak. They were the cleverest people and most in favour with congregations; and so the humble parish priest thought it useful to adopt their dress, and as far as possible to identify himself with them. That they [the ambulatory preachers] did wear the gown requires no proof; and, curiously enough, at the only cathedral in which the sermon is delivered in the black gown, St. Paul's, the morning sermon is that which was formerly preached at Paul's Cross, and the preacher is the sole lineal representative of the licensed preacher of the Reformation. That the cathedrals are *the* standard of all other churches, and that in *them* the sermon *during the communion* is preached in the surplice, few are prepared *to deny.*" — *Christian Remembrancer for April*, p. 513.

practices prohibited by the Church." The Chancellor must know, that they are both as clearly enjoined as any one part of the morning service; and as to expediency, the substitution of it for principle is working the ruin of both Church and state. The Rubrics on these points are as explicit as words can make them. The sermon ended, "the priest shall return," it is said, "to the LORD'S table, and begin the offertory, saying one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient in his discretion." And again, the first Rubric after the collects, at the end of the communion service, says, "upon the Sundays and other holy days (if there be no communion) there shall be said all that is appointed at the communion until the end of the general prayer [for the whole state of CHRIST'S Church militant here on earth"]. The attempt to prove from the Rubric immediately before the prayer just named, that this prayer is to be used only on communion days would never have been made had there been no special purpose to serve. The Rubric placed at the end of the communion service is clear and express; the other, if viewed as a general direction, is, at best, exceedingly doubtful, and even much more than doubtful. Need I say, in such a case, which of the two Rubrics we are bound to follow? Undoubtedly that which is clear and express. But, in truth, the Rubric before the prayer for the Church militant has nothing to do with the Sundays or Holy days when there is no communion. It is the first of a class of Rubrics which relate to the service when there is a communion; and it can never, by any fair mode of interpretation and application, be made to regulate the service on other occasions. They are expressly and most clearly provided for in the Rubric already quoted, and to which I again refer you, that there may not remain a shadow of a doubt on your minds as to what ought to be done when there is no communion.*

* The master of the Temple (The Rev. C. Benson,) whose views certainly would not be in a Rubrical direction, has discussed at some length this question respecting the prayer for the Church militant; and he arrives at the conclusion, that "the objects of the two Rubrics," the one prefixed to the prayer just named and that at the end of the communion service, "are in fact different," the design of the former being to tell the minister, "what he would not otherwise have known, *at what time*, when there is a communion, he is to put the necessary bread and wine on the table, viz. before he reads the above mentioned prayer." He then adds: "From what has been said, it follows as a necessary consequence, *that, every* Sunday morning, after the sermon, the *Rubric requires the offertory* sentences and the prayer for the

But to return to the Chancellor's letter. "If Mr. Irvine choose," he says under the head IV., "to use the bidding prayer, instead of a collect, he is at liberty to do so." "Chanting the psalms," he says, "is at the discretion of the minister," with whom it rests to determine "whether they shall be sung or said.". ..... "With regard to other points," coming under the head V., "I have advised Mr. Irvine to reconsider his practice." This referred to preaching the sermon after the third collect, and chaunting the "Gloria Patri" after it, in the evening. Both these I offered to give up, if the Bishop would order their discontinuance; but I thought it right to say, at the same time, that as I could not have a sermon either in the afternoon or evening, without some irregularity, as the Church has made provision for a sermon only in the morning, I thought it hard that I should be blamed for two irregularities or additions to the evening service, when other clergymen have generally either eight or nine.* My object has been to make the evening service like the morning, one harmonious whole; and I thought the example of some of our mother churches was the best I could follow; and I cannot understand why a cathedral service in the parish church should be offensive when others hold conventicles in their schools, not only without censure, but with general approbation.

The Chancellor next says, "VII." (VI. referred to the credence table, now removed.) "The time appointed for christenings is after the second lesson in morning or afternoon service; but I have advised Mr. Irvine to consult the wishes of his parishioners in cases where such attendance would be inconvenient." This, as you must know, I have always done, so far as the following Rubric allows, viz., that prefixed to the office for "the ministration of public baptism," there it is said, "The people are to be admonished, that it is most convenient that baptism should not be administered but on Sundays, and other Holy days, when the most numbers of people come together; as well for that the

Church militant to be read. This may be an unwelcome conclusion to many, but I firmly believe it to be inevitable and incontrovertible." *Rubrics and Canons of the Church of England considered*, p. 52.

* These are; 1. A hymn before the service. 2. A hymn after the second lesson. 3. A hymn before the sermon, generally sung in the absence of the minister. 4. The prayer or collect in the *pulpit before* the sermon. 5. The LORD'S prayer, which follows. *6. The sermon itself.* 7. A hymn after the sermon. 8. A prayer *or collect after that.* 9. The blessing. (Matt. vii. 3—5.)

congregation there present may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of CHRIST's Church, as also because, in the baptism of infants, every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to GOD in his baptism. Nevertheless, (if NECESSITY so require,) children may be baptized upon any other day." What may be deemed NECESSITY, in such a case, it is not needful just now to inquire. It cannot surely be a mere unwillingness to bring the children to CHRIST's ordinance in the face of the congregation.

The last item which I shall now mention, (for I have dealt elsewhere with that about burials,)* is the marriage service. That the Chancellor allows to be "performed agreeably to the letter of the Rubric, though it differs from the general usage."†

How the Rubrics came to be so neglected is a question which has been sometimes put to me. There are two very

* The memorialists have put forth, conspicuously, the opinion of the Chancellor on the course which, it is alleged, I have pursued towards one portion of my parishioners. And no doubt an opinion from such a quarter deserves grave consideration. He characterises my conduct in refusing, in certain cases, to admit the corpse into the church, as "uncharitable, invidious and unauthorized." When he said this, however, he seems to have forgotten, that the Church, speaking of the same class of persons, says; "let them be excommunicated, and not restored, but by the Archbishop, after their repentance and public revocation of their wicked errors." (Canon XI.) Which of the two opinions ought to carry weight with churchmen may be safely left to the reader. My wishes extend not to excommunication in the present state of things. All I have asked for is an *opportunity of seeing, that those, who wish me to bury them, die professedly* IN THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH, *whose service they wish to be said over them after death.* When this is refused me, is it "uncharitable or invidious" to refuse, as far as the law allows, Christian sepulture. Those who will not see their pastor, on their dying beds, are surely most unfit to be committed to the ground as *dear brethren in the Lord.* My authority in this matter is the second Rubric in the Burial Service; and though the Chancellor suggests another interpretation, he clearly allows that my view of it is unassailable by saying, in reference to this and the other charges preferred against me last summer; "In this case I DO NOT SEE GROUND FOR INSTITUTING FURTHER PROCEEDINGS."

It is well known that when there is only a grave service, except in the case of privately baptized infants, it is understood to be a virtual denial of Christian burial.

† "At the day and time appointed for solemnization of matrimony, the persons to be married shall come into *the body of the church.*"—*Rubric.*

"Then the minister or clerks *going* to the Lord's table shall say or *sing this psalm.*"—*Rubric.*

obvious reasons for this neglect. One is a desire to keep Church people from becoming Dissenters, by setting up Dissenting practices in the Church, which, it was thought, (though the event proved otherwise,) would prevent their withdrawing from it. Another is a wish to shorten the service. This led to the omission of all that follows the sermon in the morning, except a collect and the blessing, and also to the discontinuance of public baptisms. The aim of the clergy generally, during a great part of the last century, was to get through their work, with as little trouble as possible; and when a better spirit arose among them, it was unhappily associated with something like a contempt for ritual observance. To this we owe the great prevalence of dissent, both in the Church and out of it. A better day has dawned upon us; and, I hope, we shall now see evangelical truth, the most fervent piety, and the most devoted and self-denying labours, harmoniously blended with a due regard to authority, even in things indifferent in themselves, but serious duties when they bear upon them the stamp of obligation. By a conscientious man no commanded duty can be deemed a trifle.

I have now gone through the main points objected to, and I have shown their accordance with the laws of the Church; and, in the case of baptisms and burials, I have pointed out their great importance. These latter are vital points, whatever may be said of some others; and these are, I suppose, the things which have given most dissatisfaction. The others are confessedly of less moment, adopted by myself out of dutiful obedience to the Church's authority, and as a step towards uniformity in the performance of public worship,* and with a view to render that worship as free

* The assertion so confidently made in certain quarters, that there was uniformity in the performance of the services of the Church till those who wish to observe the Rubrics caused an interruption to the former happy agreement in practice, is notoriously untrue. *Seventy different modes* of performing the morning service alone have been distinctly enumerated; and it is believed, that the actual variations in that one service are greater than *seventy*. Such indeed has been the diversity of practice, *that I never could venture to say the prayers in any strange Church without asking first how that part of the service was performed. It was also necessary for me before going into the pulpit to inquire what was to be done there.* With one or two exceptions the following of the Rubrics would secure strict uniformity; and it is most lamentable that unreasonable prejudices and groundless fears should stand in the way of such a blessing. *That the most* prejudiced can have no difficulty in finding uniformity *in the Rubrics*, I am inclined to infer from the circumstance,

from all appearance of sectarianism as possible; for the innovations which I have left out are puritanical ones, intended to make us symbolise with Protestant Dissenters; and the restorations I have made are simply a return to the practices of better times—practices which had been dropped in an age of lukewarmness and degeneracy. The following letter from a clerical friend of mine confirms this view.* It is addressed to the editor of a public journal:—

"Sir,—So much being said in every presentation, petition, or complaint, on the 'innovations,' 'obsolete customs,' &c. &c., which are now revived by High Churchmen, Tractarians, or Puseyites, or whatever name most pleases churchwardens, or other worthy persons to designate their 'spiritual pastors,' I cannot but think the following may be of use to some who are doubtful as to authority and usage in the manner of celebrating divine service in our old parish churches. The question is, whether the offertory and prayer for the Church militant have ever been used, except when there was a communion. I answer, I know of two parish churches where such was the custom within the last twenty years. The two parishes are Whickham and Ryton, both in the county of Durham. In Whickham the custom ceased during the rectorship of Dr. Grey, (afterwards Bishop of Hereford,) who for a considerable time was non-resident. The duties of the parish being very onerous, the curate, to lighten his own toil, adopted the now prevailing custom of closing the service from the pulpit. *But on communion Sundays the collection was (and still is) made from the whole congregation*,—from the non-communicants during the psalm before the sermon, from the communicants at the offertory; and there are two collections every sacrament Sunday. The *principle* of collecting from the whole congregation is thus maintained, and it will be found prevalent in *many parts* of that diocese. At Ryton the custom died rather a different death. Before the invention of 'patent chunks,' 'hot water,' and other warm applications, our congregations suffered from cold. On one particularly freezing Sunday, the worshippers were aroused by an information from that important functionary, the parish clerk, 'Notice

that a writer, strongly opposed to the observance of them, in giving various modes of performing the morning service, exhibits, under the head "Rubrical," that mode which is adopted here. No other method would ever be thought of by any one who reads the Rubrics with any attention, whether he thinks it right to obey them or not.

* *This has been* added since the sermon was preached.

is hereby given, *the Church militant will not be prayed for till warmer weather comes.'* Like Felix's convenient season, warmer weather never came. I doubt not many could tell a like story; and many an old yeoman of Northumberland and Durham could witness to the fact, that, to his knowledge, neither offertory or prayer for the Church militant is Romish or obsolete. I am, &c., E. B. — P.S. I need not say the surplice* is the only robe known in the ministrations of either church."

I recollect perfectly well Bishop Skinner, of Aberdeen, always used the prayer for the Church militant, and, I believe, the offertory sentences. In country places, the collections are made in Scotland from pew to pew, as with us; in towns, as the people enter the church.

Still, as I said two Sundays ago, had the Primate's letter been published before I made the restorations, I would not have made them; I should have waited for the promised general measure. I would not even have made them had I known that any serious offence would have been taken in any quarter. I should have waited till I had seen the prevalence of a better spirit. But, having made them, and that with the tacit concurrence of the congregation, and for most important ends, I do not see that I am called to give up, to mere intimidation, what is plainly commanded, and what I believe now to be a solemn duty on my part to adhere to.† I dare not countenance the senseless clamour that has been raised against honest and worthy men, who are far

* "It is a fact," says another correspondent, addressing the same Journalist, "that in the parish of Bamborough, in the county of Northumberland, the surplice in preaching, the weekly offertory, and the prayer for the Church militant — the three practices which have occasioned so ridiculous and unreasonable an outcry, have all been in constant use from time immemorial. With regard to the surplice in preaching, the use of it in this diocese was, until lately, universal; and even still it is the custom of the majority of the churches. Wherever the gown prevails, some of the inhabitants could specify the time when the innovation was made. With regard to the prayer for the Church militant, there is reason to believe, that the use of it was once general throughout the diocese, at all events in two of the churches of Newcastle-on-Tyne, it was invariably read twenty or thirty years ago, about which time it shared the same fate as the *double daily service*, which had, till then, been kept up in the same two churches."

† "THE ALTERATIONS IN THE MODE OF CONDUCTING THE SERVICES ARE NOT SUCH AS CAN AFFECT THE DEVOUT WORSHIP OF GOD, OR PREVENT THE EDIFICATION OF THE WORSHIPPER; AND CONSEQUENTLY IT MUST BE A LESS GRIEVANCE TO THE CONGREGATION TO *ACQUIESCE IN THEM*, THAN IT WOULD BE TO THE VICAR TO VIOLATE *HIS SENSE OF DUTY* IN RELAXING THEM."—Bishop's *Letter to the Memorialists.*

more devoted Churchmen than many of their calumniators;* and I know that I have on my side all the real friends of good order. When the Bishop of Exeter stood up in that sanctuary of honour and justice, the House of Lords, and explained there the part he had taken in his own diocese, and exposed, with deserved severity, the ignorance and hypocrisy of the leading agitators, he met with not merely a patient hearing, but the cheers of those to whom he addressed himself. I do not speak in this way because I think lightly of what has happened here. I would, believe me, pay a large price for the restoration of peace. I hope the experience of the last five years will satisfy every reasonable man and woman, that there is no personal sacrifice I would not gladly make, and no amount of labour which I would not undergo, for the good of the parish and the contentment of the people. But principle I cannot sacrifice, especially after having taken my stand upon it; not as "one man,"

* There can be no question, that the Romish views embraced and advocated by Mr. Ward, and more or less adopted or pleaded for by a few others, and the mischievous fooleries of some half-score young clergymen, have served to prejudice some well-meaning persons against Church discipline and rubrical conformity; and it is to be lamented that any such impediments should have arisen. But it is surely a great mistake to suppose, that there would have been no opposition raised to sound Churchmanship had it not been for the extravagancies just mentioned. No one who knows any thing of the writings or life of the late Bishop Porteus would suspect him of having had any Popish tendencies; yet when he and Archbishop Cornwallis, about seventy years ago, endeavoured to promote the observance of Good Friday, which for many a long year had been scarcely distinguished from any other Friday, the Low Church and liberal papers of the day raised the same sort of clamour against these estimable prelates as their successors have recently done against equally estimable men, who are just as free from any wish to favour Popery as they were. The following paragraph, extracted from a newspaper of the time referred to, and having in view the effort then being made to promote the observance of Good Friday, shows that the "No Popery" banner has been used before as the standard under which pretended Churchmen, schismatics, heretics, infidels, atheists, adulterers, and every vile and worthless character, have delighted to wage war against Church principles and Church practices: "By this experiment on the tame and servile temper of the times, it is thought that the *host* and *crucifix* [the italics are in the original] may be elevated to prostrate crowds in the dirty streets some years sooner than could otherwise have been reasonably expected. And when a Wedderburn shall be keeper of the King's conscience and seals," *i. e.*, Lord Chancellor, "and a Porteus of the spiritual keys," Archbishop of Canterbury, "as the *alterius orbis* Papa, there is no doubt but our consciences, and our property too, will be effectually taken *care of.*"

acting in opposition to the wishes of a portion of his charge, but as the minister of CHRIST, seeking to carry out, with kindness and consideration, the provisions of the Church for the good of all her children. This, I trust, you will all recognize as my present position; and I do not see that any thing would be gained by my giving it up. Indeed, I am persuaded much would be lost; for I see no resting-place between it and that, which would render my labours as inefficient as those of my predecessors appear to have been; and I scarcely wonder now that they made no serious effort to act in accordance with the rules and principles of the Church.*

Now, I came here to be the pastor of this parish, and not a mere partisan. I came here with the purpose of taking the oversight, as far as I could, of you all. I came with the determination, with GOD'S help, to do my best to set in order the things which were wanting: and, GOD knows, I found the parish an awful moral waste,† — Church people

* The fact that some of my neighbours have made concessions, which I do not feel myself at liberty to make will not be pleaded against me by any one who fairly considers all the circumstances of our respective cases. To me there has been no choice offered, but the retention or entire abandonment of every point on which dissatisfaction has been expressed. My present position, therefore, is the only one left me to occupy. For the opinion, however, which thoughtful men entertain of concessions, see the Appendix.

† The melancholy fact, that many parishes are much in the same condition as this, painfully proves that there is something seriously wrong in the working of our system; and surely one may, without being deemed presumptuous, express his belief that ordinary zeal and devotedness to the work of the ministry will not make any impression on the inert mass of practical atheism with which these districts abound. A great improvement has, confessedly, taken place in the Church, and a good deal has been done, during the last generation, in a right direction; but the results have not been very considerable. Worldliness appears to be as rampant as ever; and the idol, Mammon, still is worshipped with intense devotion. Crime is increasing with fearful rapidity; and while thousands are adding every year to the ranks of ungodliness, the additions to the avowed members of the Church may be counted by tens. Some of our spiritual fathers have not only seen and lamented this downward progress in wickedness, but they have ascribed it to a cause which the clergy have it in their power to remove. "That," says the present exemplary successor of Bishop Wilson, "which led, humanly speaking, to the success of the blessed Apostles, was their devotedness to the cause in which they were engaged. That which paralyses the exertions of Christian ministers of the present day is the want of this same devoted spirit. The cause which really prevents us doing the work of the LORD is, not *our want of power*, of natural or supernatural power, but the *absence of that devoted* mind which led St. Peter and St. Paul to

ashamed of the Church, and unable either to bear the reproaches or answer the arguments of separatists. The labouring classes I found bitterly hostile to the clergy, whom they spoke of as men who had no sympathy for the poor, and who either would not or dared not tell the rich their duty. Again and again have I been told, "If you tell the great ones of their duty in the way you tell the poor, they will strip the gown off your back." I thought that I could tell them of their duty without offence; and certainly I have done it, as I hope, with all becoming moderation. And while I have told those in better circumstances what they ought to do, and urged them to be, as PROVIDENCE designed they should be, the friends and benefactors of those dependent on them for employment and support, I have not failed to show to such as occupy humble stations the nature and extent of their duty. My anxiety has been to promote a right understanding between the two classes,—to lead the higher, as I have already said, to take a parental interest in the lower, —and the latter to be respectful, industrious, and well conducted. But I saw little hope, that this happy

give up all and follow CHRIST. My firm belief is, that if we, as a body of clergy, were as entirely devoted to the service of CHRIST as the Apostles were, we should produce a corresponding effect upon the world with which we are personally conversant. Not that we should bring souls to CHRIST by working miracles, but that we should be enabled to bring them to CHRIST without the miracles. If twelve men would now give up their all to serve CHRIST, the cause of CHRIST would be wonderfully advanced. ..... When men see others giving up, for the cause of CHRIST, that which the mass of mankind would seek for, they perceive a reality of which nothing else can convince them. ..... The mass of mankind always have, and always will, seek for the things of this world. ..... But GOD expects us [the clergy] to give up that which the mass of the world are seeking after; and if we do not give it up, we cannot expect that He will bless our labours. ..... When the clergy shall see their bishop giving up every other wish, every other desire, than that he may be able to promote the cause of CHRIST in his diocese, they will feel ashamed not to do the same. When the younger clergy behold their elders in the ministry surrendering their own personal inclinations for the sake of promoting that which all would desire to see accomplished, then they, too, will gladly go forward in the work, and out-do their leaders in the same course of self-denial. And when we perceive a self-sacrificing young servant of CHRIST labouring, as far as his strength will go, to promote our Master's service, giving up worldly objects, and seeking the kingdom of heaven, do you not think that it will do more than any thing else to keep us, the leaders of this little phalanx, steady and anxious to deny ourselves? The reason why we are not all doing this is, that we are all self-seeking, selfish, anxious to exalt *ourselves*, anxious to carry each our own point;" —*Charge of the Bishop of Sodor and Man for* 1844.

state of things could be brought about, unless the influences of religion could be made to bear on both these classes; and that I supposed could be accomplished only by a pastor, who would not only be laborious and self-denied, but entirely follow the Church's guiding, — regard the poor as a most important part of his charge, honestly consult their interests as well as those of their employers, and exercise, as far as circumstances permit, the discipline of the church. No other man, I supposed, (whether rightly or not I venture not to say,) would ever deserve or ever obtain a hearing from the great body of the people. Not that I should ever have thought it right to do one single thing or say one word merely to gain their good will — and no one, I suppose, will accuse me of such sycophancy — but I knew that I should never be regarded as their pastor, unless they saw that I was disposed and determined to have no partialities, but resolutely take the law of the Church for the rule of my conduct, and employ, as far as my humble abilities permitted, the various provisions of that Church for the general good. No doubt, some of the things I have done have given dissatisfaction; but they are the bitter medicine, necessary for the cure of our long neglected spiritual diseases, and its bitterness has been felt much more painfully by myself than, I believe, by any other person; but, in the hope of being honoured of God to effect that cure, I have been, and I am still willing, for a time, to be misunderstood, misrepresented, reviled, hated, and even persecuted — not for the love of such treatment, as you will readily believe, but because I am persuaded the great objects of the ministry are not to be accomplished at a less cost. For your sake, I am willing to pay this price; and I look forward with humble confidence to the time when you and your neighbours will be what, but for past neglect, they and you would have been now, attached and consistent members of the Church.

I have now shown you why I have made the restorations complained of, and I have stated to you what are the great objects I am seeking thereby to promote. I have shown you that I have done nothing without an express rule or a clear principle of action. I have told you, and most truly, that some of the things which have given offence have been adopted because they are far more lenient than the strict law; and I assure you now, that I will, as heretofore, do all I can to help you and meet your reasonable wishes about the baptism of your children and the burial of the dead; *and unless you listen* to evil counsels or act perversely, I am *sure no insurmountable* obstacle will be found in the way

either of baptisms or burials. I am disposed to make all possible allowance for your circumstances, because I know that they are owing far more to the past neglect of the Church, and the past indifference of your natural protectors, than to any fault of yours. It is surely easy for you to ask your pastor to visit your sick relatives. You can have no difficulty about sending your children to be taught by him or under his direction. The church being free in the evening, it is easy for you to qualify yourselves for being sponsors by attending then. I am simply stating what you may do; but observe, I have no wish to coerce you or force you to do one thing contrary to your liking. Deal in the same way with me. You need not, unless you please, bring your children to be baptised, taught, or prepared for confirmation. You need not attend church, unless you wish it. You are at perfect liberty to stay away from the LORD'S table. All I ask in such cases is this, — do not ask me for Christian privileges while you neglect plain Christian duties. The privilege is tied to the duty; and he who fails to do the one has no shadow of right to claim the other.*

* The persons who have a just claim to Christian burial may be divided into three classes :

1. Infants and young children duly baptized ;
2. Those who are being taught what they ought to know and believe to their soul's health, with a view to confirmation, in accordance with the pledges of their sponsors ; and,
3. Those who are communicants.

The second of these classes will comprehend the children of church-going people who attend public worship with their parents, and those who frequent some of our schools, whether their parents come to church or not. It will comprehend also such grown-up persons as, sensible of their past neglect, wish to be admitted to confirmation, and put themselves in the way of being prepared for that ordinance. Those who cannot, in any proper sense, be said to be in the communion of the Church are :

1. Infants and others not duly baptized ;
2. All those who, having been duly baptized, have neglected confirmation,* on reaching the years of discretion, or, if under that age, are not taken to church and taught, as their sponsors engaged they should be, the doctrines and principles of the Church ;† and,
3. Those who, having been confirmed, are not communicants.

That these three classes have no just claim to any Christian privilege, whilst they continue in their present state, is so manifest

* *Those who wilfully neglect confirmation should, undoubtedly, be treated as persons who have practically renounced Christianity and all interest in the* SAVIOUR *of sinners.* The promoters of the memorial appear to have recognised *this principle*, as they professedly allowed *those only to sign it who had been confirmed.*

† The sending of their children to sectarian schools, a practice not uncommon among persons professing to belong to the Church, is an evident withdrawing of *them from* that communion into which they had been received *in their baptism.*

Allow me to say a word, in conclusion, to those who either approve of what has been done here, or, at least, are willing to wait until some steps are taken to settle the discipline of the Church and produce uniformity in her worship. You must deplore, with me, what has recently happened; but I cannot believe you wish me to allow matters to return to the state in which, you know, I found them. I do think an impression is now being made as to the honesty and sincerity of your pastor. People are beginning to see that there is a difference between those who fear GOD and those who fear Him not. I certainly see a very considerable difference in the way men talk about these so-called restrictions, which are complained of in the memorial. They are beginning to see and own, that they are ordered by the Church, and that every clergyman is bound to stand by them.* Many who have not made any effort to secure proper sponsors, and lead such lives as would qualify them for being sponsors themselves, act thus because they have been taught to believe that your pastor would be compelled to give way and return to the late usages, which admitted any one to stand for a child, let his character and conduct be ever so disreputable. Am I then to show these perverse

that no reasonable person can blame a Christian minister who looks upon them as practically excommunicated. Some of them may be, in the main, very worthy persons; yet, while they live in the wilful neglect of the known requirements of the Church, they cannot be numbered among her acknowledged members.

* "Every clergyman has said, '*I do solemnly declare, that I will use the form prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, and* NONE OTHER.' Such being the case, how is it possible that any one, who has seriously considered this pledge, can for a moment think of compromising truth and honesty at the shrine of a hollow and sinful expediency. Some persons excuse their disobedience of the Church's laws by the plausible, though fallacious, argument, that when they vowed obedience to the Prayer Book there was a mutual understanding between their bishops and themselves, that certain practices, although specified in our formularies, should be considered obsolete. But such an argument appears to savour more of that spirit which actuated Ananias and Sapphira than of that Christian charity which 'rejoiceth not in iniquity,' (or, as it might be rendered, *falsehood*,) 'but in the truth.' With quite as good a grace might a person enter a witness box, in a court of justice, and after he had taken an oath to 'speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,' retain a part of the truth in his own bosom; and, when accused of unfaithfulness to his oath, declare the course which he had adopted to be justifiable on the ground, that there was a mutual understanding to that effect between the magistrate and himself. The plea of breaking engagements, on account of custom, is utterly inconsistent with *Christian candour.*"—*The Rev. James* Bonwell's Letter, pp. 15, 16.

and careless persons that there will be no such return, and thus bring them to lead better lives; or am I to allow them to remain as they are? Am I to throw away all the promise of good which I see arising on every hand.* If you think that the comparatively new ways which I found here, and which set at nought some of the most important provisions of the Church, and which have proved so fearfully injurious to her interests; if you think them better than the old and genuine ways of the Church, which I have partially restored, then you will withdraw from your pastor your sympathy, your countenance, and your prayers. But if you think that, on the whole, he is right, you will not, I am sure, be discouraged yourselves, or ashamed of him, because he happens to be a good deal spoken against, and because you yourselves are distressed by what you see and hear around you. That some Dissenters, both Popish and Protestant, should rejoice at what has happened, does not surprise me. It is just what might have been expected. They imagine, no doubt, that they shall profit by our divisions, even more than they had used to do by our want of energy and adherence to Church principles. But their gain, I hope, will be scarcely worth notice, even in point of numerical additions; and that, should it take place, will not improve their condition. It will not, certainly, lessen their existing tendencies to contention and division. Right-minded people, of all persuasions, will regard our distractions with grief, whatever may be their opinion as to their causes — and there are such people here:

* The Bishop has recommended no such course; "I am content," he says, "to hope that the views taken by the Vicar of the Rubric, and his interpretation of its provisions, may answer his expectations, and prove, eventually, favourable to the cause of religion in the parish." The Bishop indeed does say that his "opinion agrees with that of the memorialists in regard to many of the changes introduced into the services of their church;" but this he immediately modifies by saying, "I should never have advised them," which surely means, that he simply deems them inexpedient under existing circumstances. He then adds, "As I am not aware of any instance in which the laws of the church are clearly transgressed, I have no official right to interfere;" and, in his private communication to me at the time, he makes the same declaration. After expressing the hope quoted at the beginning of this note, the Bishop says, "Whatever may be our judgment concerning the regulations which have caused offence, the Vicar's laborious and self-denying efforts, in providing for the temporal and spiritual wants of the people committed to his charge, sufficiently evince the spirit by which he is actuated." — Letter to the *Memorialists*. — The great body of the communicants and congregation *have expressed* no dissatisfaction.

men with whom I have felt it a pleasure to hold friendly intercourse; men for whom I entertain great personal respect; and I am sure they have too much good sense to allow the honest expression, on my part, of the principles of the Church of which I am a minister, and my acting in accordance with those principles, to interrupt our cordiality. I hope you will all cultivate a friendly disposition towards those who differ from you, whether in politics or religion, or in both conjoined. You may be thorough Church people, and yet most tolerant of the opinions and practices of others. You may have a just abhorrence of all schism, and yet regard with kindness those who have unhappily been betrayed into it. What I have already set before you in some recent publications, on this and some other important points, will, I hope, receive your candid and prayerful consideration; and most earnestly do I desire to see you cultivating the spirit and conduct therein recommended. If any of you should feel any doubt or difficulty on any matter, let me beg that you will consult me about it. You will always find me ready to answer your questions, and, as far as lies in me, to meet your wishes. To you I need not make professions of affectionate regard. You cannot fail to know that I still entertain the sentiments which I expressed more than four years ago, when I said, "Ye are in our heart, to live and die with you." Recent events have not discouraged me, though they have pained me; and I have seen nothing, as yet, to make me think that I have been mistaken in the estimate I had formed of your character. I have seen that you will not be carried away either to disgrace yourselves or set at nought the rules of the Church of which you are members. Would to GOD the same regard to truth and good order had been manifested in all other places. Still, we must not boast. Depend upon it, we all needed this chastisement which has befallen us. May it lead us to humble ourselves on account of our short-comings, which have called for this painful visitation; may it lead us to value our privileges more, and improve them more diligently. Let us act as people who "love the habitation of GOD's house." Let us guard against all bitterness of spirit also. If the charge brought against myself, of having indulged, the Sunday before last, in this bitterness of spirit, be a true one, I sincerely lament it.* I meant to be neither bitter nor unkind. I was not conscious of the feelings that have been

* This refers to the Homily on Palm Sunday, which was *previously written* and well considered, and delivered almost verbatim. *Any one may see the MS.*

publicly ascribed to me. I hope I said not one word concerning the memorial and the manner of getting it signed which the circumstances of the case did not warrant, nay demand. I did not wish to give offence; but I felt it was due to you, as well as to myself, to set before you the real character of the document you were expected to sign, and to put you on your guard against the unprincipled methods which I had heard were adopted to procure signatures. If I did more than this, I did more than I intended to do; and no one can lament more sincerely than I do the necessity there was for what I then thought it necessay to say; for most assuredly all the objects aimed at might have been sought with the strictest regard to Christian courtesy and kindness to myself.

The replies which have been hitherto made to my statements do not seem to call for any particular notice, beyond what they have received this evening. The value of the conversations held with myself, and the dependence to be placed on the published reports of my proceedings, you will now be able fully to appreciate. Indeed, some of the language attributed to me savours so strongly of the conventicle that no one who knows me will mistake it for mine. The charge made against me of violating the Rubric, in giving notice of the communion, is a very sorry one. There are two Rubrics on this subject; one after the Nicene creed, and another at the end of the prayer for the Church militant. I cannot reconcile these apparently contradictory Rubrics, and I have seen nobody that can. The practice I adopt, in the absence of better authority, is that which I have always seen followed. Happily, it is almost a solitary case of difficulty. The Rubrics, generally, are abundantly plain. I have not thought it necessary to ask the bishop how I am to reconcile the Rubrics referred to; but if the memorialists signify their wish that he should be consulted, I shall take care to submit the case for his decision. Be assured, I do not willingly neglect any rule of the Church which depends on me alone. When the observance requires the co-operation of others, I must wait till there is a disposition to grant that co-operation.

One word as to the danger to your liberties from the alleged domineering and intolerant spirit of a portion of the clergy. Now, I do think amongst some of them there is a domineering and intolerant spirit, and a considerable portion of the laity appear to be more or less infected with it. But, then, these are not the men who plead for Rubrics and *canons; but men who set* them and their bishops at defiance *when it suits their purpose* to do so. From people of this

sort the greatest danger is to be apprehended; and the course they are now pursuing, unless checked, will lead to a repetition of the tyranny which followed the martyrdom of King Charles; a tyranny so unbearable that the mere prospect of an end being put to it was hailed with transports of almost maddening delight. From men who own the authority of Rubrics, canons, and bishops, you have nothing to fear on the score of liberty. The clergy cannot, of themselves, make one rule to bind you without your consent, expressed by the Queen and the Parliament. If they deny you a privilege, to which you have a right, you have an inexpensive mode of redress, so far as Rubrical clergymen are concerned. They will do what their bishops require of them in all things lawful; whereas not a few of the others have shown that they disregard the law, and that they will resist authority when backed by the strong current of popular opinion. For myself, I am not in the habit of making great professions; but I hope my conduct is far more in accordance with liberal principles than that of some who make greater pretensions to liberality than I am accustomed to do. I have no wish to enslave any body; and I am sure no one, who has respect for the law and constituted authorities, can ever be dangerous to the liberties of the people.

Now, Christian brethren, I hope there is an end of this contention, so far as you and your pastor are concerned.* Let us henceforth provoke one another to love and to good works. It will grieve me exceedingly, should any of you manifest an un-Christian spirit. Whatever others may do, let us remember and act on the exhortation of the Apostle; "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as GOD for CHRIST'S sake hath forgiven you."

* Here it was intimated, that the Bishop had expressed a wish that nothing more should be said publicly on the subject, and it was stated that his wish would be complied with, unless some serious misrepresentations should require correction. Such an occasion having arisen a brief letter was published in consequence. The sermon, to which this note is appended, was announced and prepared previous to the receipt of any communication from the bishop. His lordship was apprised of its delivery and contents. The communication made to the *Liverpool Mail* was simply to obtain the correction of the report of the homily delivered on Palm Sunday. The printing of this sermon has been the result of a desire to meet the wishes of many of those who heard it. It has been published, therefore, simply for their satisfaction, and not with a view to provoke any further discussion, which is much to be deprecated.

APPENDIX.

Since the foregoing sermon was put into the printers' hands, the following most significant and instructive paragraph has been brought under the author's notice. It appeared in a Low Church periodical, the *Christian Observer* for last month, pp. 190, 191:

"A document meets our eyes, which we have perused with much pain and alarm, when we consider all that it involves. We allude to the letter of the Rev. J. Symonds, curate of Falmouth, to the churchwardens of his parish, dated February 20. The churchwardens say, that 'Mr. Symonds, under the authority of the rector, has ceded every point stipulated for by us in our official capacity.' This is very remarkable language. The churchwardens '*stipulate*,' the rector and his curate '*cede*;' and they '*cede* every point *stipulated* for.' And what are these points? Mr. Symonds says, I purpose to discontinue (1) the chanting of the psalms; (2) the turning towards the communion table by the priest while the creed is being read; (3) the use of the surplice in the pulpit; (4) the omission of the collect and the LORD'S prayer immediately before the sermon; (5) and the reading of the prayers of the communion service, when there is no communion. Here are five points 'stipulated' for and 'ceded.' Is this what any clergyman — any Churchman — can think a good state of things? There is not one of these ceded points which is contrary to the doctrines or discipline of the Church of England, except turning to the east, and that only tacitly; and being an old custom, and by many persons esteemed decent, we cannot see that one man has a right to interfere with another's personal liberty in the matter."

The Bishop of Exeter, however, has expressly commanded the "ceding" curate not to give up the prayer for the Church militant when there is no communion, with a tolerably significant hint as to the light in which he regards such cessions. Many clergymen have, no doubt, felt themselves to be placed in a most painful position during the last few months; and several of them have acted like the rector and curate of Falmouth. This ceding temper called forth the following remarks in an able Church periodical of a better school than that which the *Christian Observer* represents. The writer says, "Whatever difficulties we may have felt about stirring this Rubrical question, as to the propriety of conformity on a general scale; however much we may regret that the great Church revival has taken this merely external form; we cannot but think that the very deadliest blow which has happened to the Church of England will be the probable fact, that not one of its ministers can bear up against the *civium ardor prava jubentium*. Surely they who introduced these changes are bound to show that they are not mere formalists; that they had a real religious object at heart; that they did feel that these things were truths without which they had found their sermons and other teaching powerless, and mutilated, and nothing: and this they can only do by consistency, — by firmness tempered by discretion, but still by consistency. Every possible reason for abstaining from improved ritual observances we could have acquiesced in before the tumults of Exeter; but *now* we cannot accept a single apology for yielding."

THE FOLLOWING

SERMONS BY THE REV. J. IRVINE,

Have been published.

1.—THE REASONABLENESS AND NECESSITY OF ACTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAWS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH.
Price 4d.

2.—THE DUTIES OF THE RICH.
3.—THE DUTIES OF THE POOR.
4.—LENT SERMONS.
Price 3d. each.

5.—THE GROUNDS AND EVIDENCES OF A PASTOR'S LOVE TO HIS FLOCK.
Price 4d.

PRINTED BY CHARLES SIMMS AND CO., MANCHESTER.

Death in Life, and Life in Death.

A SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY

THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY

OF

THE LOSS OF THE PEGASUS,

DELIVERED IN

ST. CUTHBERT'S CHAPEL, FARNE ISLES,

AND IN

THE PARISH CHURCH OF HOLY ISLAND,

IN THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST, 1845.

BY THE

REV. FRANCIS MINDEN KNOLLIS, M.A.

FELLOW AND JUNIOR DEAN OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD; AND LATE RECTOR OF CONGERSTONE, LEICESTERSHIRE.

"At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."—*St. Matthew* xxv. 6.
"In the midst of life we are in death."—*Burial of the Dead.*
"And the sea gave up the dead."—*Revelation* xx. 13.

LONDON:

EDWARDS AND HUGHES, 12, AVE-MARIA LANE;
JAMES BURNS, PORTMAN STREET; GRAHAM, OXFORD; DEARDEN, NOTTINGHAM; WILSON, BERWICK-ON-TWEED.

MDCCCXLV.

Price 4d.; or 3s. 6d. per Dozen.

J. RIDER, PRINTER, 14, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE, LONDON.

To the Peaceful Memory

OF

GRACE HORSLEY DARLING,

WHOSE EMINENT COURAGE IN THE HOUR OF PERIL

WAS CROWNED BY YET

MORE EMINENT HUMILITY IN THE HOUR OF PROSPERITY,

The following Sermon

IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED AND DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

St. Cuthbert's, Farne Isles,
August, 1845.

As some of my Readers may not have seen the account of the fearful Shipwreck of the Pegasus, on July 20, 1843, I have subjoined a brief extract from the narrative of Charles Bailey, one of the survivors:—

"The steam-ship Pegasus left Leith harbour, bound for Hull, on Wednesday afternoon, at half-past five o'clock, July 19th, 1843; having on board about sixty persons, including the crew. She commenced her voyage, with a delightfully smooth sea, and a clear blue sky; the sun shining in his splendour, and the vessel majestically and rapidly gliding through the waves. After enjoying the pleasing sight for an hour and a half, I went into the cabin with Mr. Torry, who took tea; and shortly after retired to rest. Being acquainted with the Captain, we took tea together in his cabin; and can state, that, at half-past seven o'clock, he was perfectly sober.* At eight o'clock I went on deck, all going on well,—and continued there, until I was the last person left of the cabin passengers. At a quarter to eleven I again entered into conversation with the Captain, and at that hour he was quite sober. At eleven o'clock I went below, and found all in bed, except two gentlemen reading, sitting at opposite sides of the cabin: Mr. Torry still being asleep, I sat down on the sofa near his bed, but could not sleep. After I had been there for about an hour and a half, I was suddenly thrown, by a violent shock, to the other end of it. I immediately awoke Mr. Torry, telling him to dress directly; I then ran on deck, went to the steersman, Robert Melville, and asked him what we had struck; he answered, 'I do not know.' I said, 'I am sure it is a rock;' to which he made no reply: looking round, I saw the compass in the binnacle rapidly turning, from the collision. On going forward, I heard from some of the fore-cabin passengers, that she was fast taking in water. At that moment, being close to the cabin, I ran down and opened the ladies' cabin door; and loudly shouted to them and the gentlemen, that the vessel had struck a rock, and was filling with water.

"Mr. Torry having got dressed, we went on deck, and found the crew lowering the starboard or right hand side boat, with seven persons in her. I put Mr. Torry in her;

* This seems considered very doubtful.—F. M. K.

and, when lowered down to the water, I and two other passengers leaped into the boat: making, in all, twelve individuals. The paddle-wheels were, during the time the boat was lowering and in the water, in motion, backing the vessel off the rock; so that the water was still at the after-part of the ship; the head or bow of the boat being towards the paddle-wheel, the fore-tackle at liberty; and just when going to unfasten the stern-tackle, to move to the land, one of the ship's crew cried out,—'Stick to the ship.' The paddle-wheels were then turned ahead, to move the vessel forward; the back-water instantly going over the boat's head, and filling her with water; throwing out a female first, (the only one in the boat,) then all the others. While in the water, I caught hold of the stern-tackle that had now got liberated from the boat, and holding on of Mr. Torry, until he was torn from me by the back-water. The back-water increasing in strength, I was at last dragged away; nearly drowned. Passing the stern of the vessel, I snatched at the rudder-chains, which were close to the water's edge, and was able to succeed to reach them. I never was nearer being drowned than at that moment. I cried out, in God's name, to give me a rope, and the mate lowered one. Whilst in the water, I now observed the larboard boat, which is on the left side of the ship, swamped in the same manner as ours was; and two sailor-passengers climbing up the stern-tackles; all having perished but them. The boat being full, and larger than ours, must have had not less than eighteen persons in her.

"Having got again on deck by means of the rope, I heard the mate order the stewardess to fetch the blue lights and rocket up,—the former were burnt, and the latter was fired, but no one came. Observing the bow of the vessel fast sinking in the water, I asked the mate what was the depth alongside of the rock; he said that it was very steep, and would entirely cover the vessel.

"At that period, near to the cabin sky-light, I saw Mr. J. M. Mackenzie, with his head raised towards heaven, his arm uplifted, and a closed book in his hand, surrounded by a number of passengers on their knees. Although all were engaged in prayer, I distinctly heard Mr. Mackenzie's voice above the rest. I was struck with his cool and collected manner.

"*I now began to* undress, determining in my mind to

swim to the shore; praying to the Almighty to spare my life, to tell the news of the dreadful catastrophe. On pulling out my watch, set by Leith time, I saw by the light, from the cabin sky-light, that she had stopped at half-past twelve o'clock; which would be about five or ten minutes after the vessel struck. I laid it on the companion, which is the covered doorway to the cabin, having seats round three of its sides, for the cabin passengers on deck. On the opposite side of the companion, was seated a lady; calmly and prayerfully resigning herself to God. There were two children at her side, unconscious of their danger, and in cheerful conversation. I heard a passenger say to the Captain, whilst he was standing on the starboard side, abreast of the gangway rail,—'What are we to do now that the boats are lost?' He replied,—'You must do the best you can for yourselves.' He afterwards went on the bridge over the paddle-wheels, when the water was just appearing on the deck.

"Having got undressed, I began to look over the deck for Carte's Life-Buoy, but I could not find one; nor did I meet with anything that was of service to me. I saw the Captain and mate were together on the larboard paddle-box; the Captain having both his hands in his pocket, neither attempting to save himself, nor any one else. The water had now reached the quarter-deck. I got on the starboard gangway rail, which is the right side of the vessel, and was the one nearest to the shore; the paddle-boxes were just disappearing, with the Captain and mate on.

"Before leaping into the sea, I gave a last farewell look, and perceived, up the rigging of the main-mast, a female and the engineer: then on Mr. Mackenzie and those about him: I saw the water just about touching them, but they all remained fixed to the spot, as if too deeply engaged with God, to be disturbed by that element, which was to bring them nearer to their heavenly Father.

"The last moment had arrived, which was about half an hour after she struck the Goldstone Rock, when I sprung away, as far as possible into the water, to avoid being drawn down by the suction of the vessel, to swim for Holy Island, a distance of two miles; which I could perceive. On rising to the surface, I was struck on the shoulder by the iron cross-tree; owing to the vessel heeling over towards me; *but I did not feel much* injured by it. A deep rumbling

noise, arising from the waters inclosing the wreck, now assailed my ears; and suddenly I was laid hold on by, I believe, the stewardess, crying out for the Lord to have mercy on her soul. The grasp was so firm, that I could not swim; and we both sunk together to a considerable depth, and was only released, but by her drowning. While under the water, I held my breath, so, when at liberty, I came to the surface with much force. I was so exhausted, that I laid on my back panting for breath. All hope vanished from me, in ever being able to reach the land. Having partially recovered, I looked round to see if any were near me; or if a plank or other article was floating, that would be of service to me: none were near.

"The sky being clear, and the water smooth, I could perceive a great number of persons struggling in the water. Their cries and groans were most awful, and inexpressible; the sound dying away, as they sunk, one by one, till all had become silent in death. To me it was like the funeral knell,—the surge's dashing sound against those fatal rocks, —and the wild sea-fowl's screech hovering over them; as if deeply wailing for the dying and the dead.

"I began swimming about to find something to float me, and found a board, about two and a half feet square; although a very awkward piece of wood to swim with, and so thin as to be hardly able to bear me, I retained it.

"About half-past three o'clock in the morning, I saw a large steamer, near two miles off, taking the ship's course; and have since ascertained that it was the Duke of Wellington, steamer, for Hull.

"I perceived a little boy, about twelve years of age, about seventy or eighty yards off, in the wood covering of the sky-light, crying to me for help; but I was unable to render him any. He continued in my sight until within half an hour of the Martello coming up, and after that I neither heard nor saw him any more. I saw five others in the water, from three o'clock to five o'clock, until the tide changed; when I was taken by the current out to sea.

"About four o'clock in the morning, I saw a fishing boat within a mile of me, but I could not get them either to hear me or see me. I began to feel the water very cold, and all hope apparently of being saved at an end; I prayed earnestly to God to prepare me for eternity. A small three-step ladder most providentially floated to me, which I laid

hold of, and found it a great assistance to me. Two small baskets passed me, with food in; but I had no desire to stop them. The large sea birds, called 'Solan geese,' which are so numerous about the Bass Rocks, came very near me with their long beaks, and I expected every moment that they would dart at me; but from them I was graciously preserved.

"About five o'clock, I saw a stream of smoke within the Ferns; and a quarter of an hour afterwards, I saw a steamer coming through the inner passage. Shortly after I perceived it to be the Martello, belonging to the same company as the Pegasus, on her passage from Hull to Leith. I saw distinctly the boat pulled away from their vessel, and then stop and return. Then the other boat; and both to repeat it two or three times. I felt certain that they were picking up persons from the Pegasus. During the time the boats were going backward and forward, neither of them were ever nearer to me than a mile and a half. A breeze of wind was now coming on from off the land, and the water became much more agitated. I felt my weakness rapidly increasing by struggling in the water; and more benumbed by the intense cold. The board had at least from twenty to thirty times slipped from under me; and I expected every moment that I should be thrown off again, and be drowned; as I was taking in large quantities of water. It was with difficulty that I held on. Both the boats were resting at the side of the Martello, and the crew appeared as if they were going to ascend the vessel; when I observed one of the boats pull towards me, my hope again began to brighten, and I held on as with a giant's strength. Seeing them pull the boat out of the direction I was in, and stop about half a mile from me, I thought that they must be picking some person up, and then they intended to come to me; but they stopped. Having a stick near, I held it up; they saw it, and made towards me. When within one or two hundred yards of me, I saw the four men pulling with all their might: they cried out,—'Hold on, my brave fellow; we will soon have you.' And at the sound of their voice, it was like bringing new life into the dead; I felt so overjoyed with gladness, at my deliverance."

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING had the pleasure and privilege of being the first priest of our own branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, who has officiated on the lonely Farne Isles, since the days of the Reformation,* and having taken no slight interest in a chapel which was partly (it is believed) constructed by Saint Cuthbert's hands, and undeniably hallowed by his presence, I feel that very little apology indeed is required for printing and publishing the following sermon.

The events which are commemorated in it;—the circumstances under which it was delivered;—the season at which it was preached;—the congregations for whose benefit it was composed;—were all of no ordinary kind. A shipwreck, by which nearly fifty of our fellow-creatures were suddenly summoned to meet their Lord and Judge;—a shipwreck on one of the loveliest nights of summer, and on one of its calmest seas;—the celebration of the first anniversary of that shipwreck which had occurred upon the Lord's day, and of the second which had ever occurred at all;—the celebration of it, moreover, in a little island chapel, only just rescued from a long course of sinful desecration, and from whence the very scene of the wreck was visible;—the points of contrast presented to the mind between the loss of the Pegasus and the

* The first service was celebrated on these Islands, on Sunday, Michaelmas Day, 1844.

loss of the Forfarshire, of which contrast the beautiful tablet to Grace Darling's memory would have formed, in itself, a sufficient memento;—the breathless attention with which it was heard by the hardy and weather-beaten sailors, for whose benefit it was principally designed, and many of whom had been among the foremost in rescuing the survivors;—these reasons alone would have been quite sufficient, *in themselves*, to have induced me to comply with many a friendly wish, and to give my Sermon, just as it was delivered, to the public press. But I trust that I am actuated by yet higher motives than these.

There are those who may peruse the following pages for the sake of mere amusement, who, through divine grace, may be led, in the end, to benefit and profit by them also.

There are those whom the voice of the first officiating minister of St. Cuthbert's Chapel may never reach; or whom, in this uncertain world, it may never reach *again*. To the former of these, his pen may form his substitute;—to the latter, it may prove his memorial. There are those who have lost relations and friends in this fearful shipwreck; to whom it may be alike the voice of comfort and the voice of warning. There are those, again, who abound in this world's goods, but "are not grieved for the affliction of Jacob," nor concerned that this little island sanctuary should, perchance, again lay waste. These may help, through the good hand of their God, if only stirred up by its perusal, to give gladly of their abundance to provide for the spiritual sustenance of those, who "go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters." And from all such I should most

sincerely rejoice to receive, at any time, the acceptable contributions of a willing mind, and a grateful heart.

And, finally, there are those, from that kind dignitary of our Church, under whose sanction I have ministered,* to the poorest individual upon, or adjacent to, these islands, who have wished me good luck, in the name of the Lord,—who have strengthened my hands and lightened my labours.

These may not dislike to receive this short discourse as a faint memorial of it's author's gratitude, and a trifling token of his sincere desire, that the Lord would grant unto them all that they may find mercy of the Lord, in that day, when the heavens and the earth shall pass away, and the sea shall give up her dead. And that God our heavenly Father, the Great and Marvellous, the Just and True, may render these few and simple pages of real and permanent use to every soul who reads them, is, at the same time, the Author's most earnest wish, as well as his most fervent prayer.

To Him, with the redeeming Son, and sanctifying Spirit, Three Persons and one GOD, be all glory in the Church, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

F. M. K.

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD,
August 20, 1845.

* Ven. Charles Thorp, D.D., Archdeacon of Durham.

Death in Life, and Life in Death,

A SERMON, &c.

PSALM xlvi. 4.*

THE RIVERS OF THE FLOOD THEREOF SHALL MAKE GLAD THE CITY OF GOD.

PERHAPS, my brethren, there is no one respect, in which the awful contrast between the righteous and the wicked is more clearly discernible, than in their *totally opposite behaviour* under *precisely* the *self-same circumstances.* It has ever been so in the olden time;—it will ever be so hereafter,—and it *is* so even now. "We know," (says the holy Apostle, writing to his converts at Rome,) "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose." And because all things *do* thus combine to this blessed end,—because all events *do* thus contribute to their final salvation,—the Christian can glory in tribulation,—can rejoice in affliction,—can bear up against bereavement,—can exult in death,—and triumph o'er the grave.

But as for the wicked it is *not* so with *them.* In adversity they murmur against God: in prosperity they do without him. They forget the hand that sustains,—they fight against the rod that chastises them.

Now it is to this amazing difference;—it is to this inconceivable contrast, that the royal Psalmist is referring at considerable length in that most beautiful Psalm from which I have this morning selected *my text.* "God," says he, "is our hope and strength:

* Prayer Book Version.

a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea: though the waters thereof rage and swell, and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same." And then, if we should ask the *reason* of this undaunted fearlessness,—if we demand the *cause* of this unshaken confidence,—if we enquire why, in the midst of danger, confusion, and perplexity, that which would be senseless recklessness in others, is only a well-grounded courage in the true people of God, we have an answer most clearly assigned to us, in those words of our text, which so directly and immediately follow,—"The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God: the holy place of the tabernacle of the most Highest." In other words —not only shall the church be saved when the world is destroyed; but far more—the very destruction of the one shall be rendered also, the very salvation of the other. The rivers of the roaring flood shall not only occasion no dismay, but further—they shall become *an actual cause of gladness* unto the favoured city of God.

Here, then, is the subject presented to our notice, and an awful subject indeed it is. Let us try, *first*, to explain and illustrate it from other passages of Holy Scripture; and then, *secondly*, to set it home, in all its solemn force, and all its practical suggestions, for our own reproof, for our own correction, for our own instruction in righteousness. And may that God without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us his mercy, and most abundantly prosper these our meditations, for *his dear Son's sake*, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The doctrine, then, which seems here laid down, in its scope and substance at any rate, is, upon the whole, much such a doctrine as this:—*The greatest trials and tribulations which can befall a wicked world in general, or any of the wicked individuals of that world in particular, shall all be turned to the blessedness, profit, and advantage of the Lord's own Catholic Church, and of all and each of her true and living members.*

The rivers of the swelling flood shall make glad the city of God.

It was so in the olden time. When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the strange people, God's way was in the sea, and his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps were not known. And through that trackless ocean he led forth his people like sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron. And the rivers of the flood thereof, at the solemn word of his omnipotence, as they parted upon either side, made glad the city of God. But that self-same sea returned to its strength, and covered the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and buried the Egyptians and all their host. To Israel it was the path of safety;—to Egypt, the method of destruction.

Again—When the angel of the Lord, which went before the camp of his chosen people, removed and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel, how different was it in its effects,—how unlike in its appearance,—in the eyes of the persecutors of God's elect, and in those of his own inheritance!

It was a cloud and darkness to *them*, but it gave light by night to *these*. It was the mysterious token *of the* Almighty's presence; and the righteous knew *it and were glad;* while their enemies' trembling

hearts misgave them, and those hearts were only heavy and sorrowful; for "even as the wax melteth before the fire, so do the ungodly perish at the presence of God." Yet these were but the different consequences of *the one and the self-same* presence; these were but the different effects of *the one and the self-same* sea.

So, again, in the New Testament. In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins it was one and the self-same voice that startled both of them from their midnight slumbers, and bade them one and all arise, and trim their lamps, and go forth to meet the bridegroom.—The self-same *voice!* my brethren, but oh! in how different a cadence did its summons seem to fall upon those whose darkened lamps had drank up all the oil of grace;—when there were none who had enough to lend, and none who had time to buy—and those whose loins were girded and their lamps burning, and they themselves like unto servants waiting for their Lord, and ready to open to him immediately. And once more:—A day is fast coming,—a day which we shall all behold,—a day when the stars shall fall from heaven, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,—a day when the throne shall be set, and the books shall be opened, and every one of us, my brethren, now met together in this lowly temple, shall give account of our own selves to God.

But oh! how different, how awfully different shall be the appearance of the judge, and the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of the archangel, and the riven tomb, and the flaming worlds, upon those who, by patient continuance in well-doing, have faithfully served their Redeemer *here*, and those who have put off their repentance to a dying hour, and deferred *their amendment* to a more convenient season!

Oh! how many shall exclaim in that day unto the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us!

Yet, brethren,—the true people of God, in the midst of all that awful tumult, shall be enabled to rejoice, and to lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh. They will behold in Him that sitteth upon the throne, the blessed features of that Redeemer, who once had suffered for them upon the cross;—they will perceive in the countenance of the judge, the gracious smile of their deliverer;—and the rivers of even that fiery flood shall, in all the unutterable anticipations of eternal blessedness, and unfading glory, for ever and for ever make glad the ransomed city of GOD. But,—even before that awful day shall dawn, from the ends of the earth we have heard songs, even glory for the righteous.

GOD, revealed by his Son, manifested in his Church, and obeyed through his Spirit,—GOD, a pardoning, a reconciled, an honoured and a beloved God, has been glorified by his saints in the midst of the roaring billows,—on the hulk of the sinking ship,—on the ledge of the barren rock, and amid these lone islets of the sea.—And we have heard with our ears, as well as have been told by our fathers, that the Lord has verified his own most faithful promise: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon thee, because he trusteth in thee."

But oh! has it been so with *all?* Above all, let us rather ask, in all seriousness, and all sincerity, as men who are now in God's presence, and who, before another sabbath, may stand before his judgment throne, would it, under such most awful circumstances, be really so with *us?*

Would the billows of the river of death (as far as we our own selves are concerned) become a cause of joy unspeakable, unto the purchased city of God? Would the redeeming Saviour behold in *us* of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, and would the self-same holy angels, who had rejoiced over our repentance upon earth, receive a fresh accession to their own celestial gladness at the gracious admission of our disembodied spirits to the eternal glories of a common heaven?

My brethren, my beloved brethren, I would fain press home this solemn enquiry with real affection and real earnestness, as one who has come many and many a long mile, most gladly and willingly to minister among you—as one who feels a sincere desire that you may be presented faultless, one and all, before your Redeemer's throne, whenever or wheresoever ye may each and all be summoned to stand before it;—I would speak as a dying priest speaking to dying men, and in this spirit I would ask you, one and all, *Are* YOU *prepared for a sudden call to come forth and meet your God?* Oh! on the return of this most mournful day,* in this our little island sanctuary, before such a congregation as the present, at the very time of year, when you are all too apt to be overcharged, if not with surfeiting and drunkenness, yet at any rate with the too absorbing cares of this life,†—on a sabbath, too, when the Altar of Christ is prepared, and that Cup of blessing, and that Bread of life set before you, whereof if a humble Christian by faith partake, he shall live and

* Sunday, July 20, 1845.

† The commencement of the herring fishing.

not die,—I could scarcely have preached upon any other subject; I could scarcely have drawn my own thoughts to any different topic.

The difference between the righteous and the wicked, and the *cause* of that difference;—the circumstances so similar; the conduct so opposite;—and the *consequences* too of that most fearful difference—the choice of the one side or the other of that unfathomable gulf which separates the place of torment from the throne of glory, and the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, from the unfading tree of life, and the eternal paradise of God,—this, brethren, is our subject to-day, and may the Lord give us all grace to think of it.

For, would any of you forget God *to-day?* There is a louder voice than mine to remind you! There is a voice from the sinking Pegasus, and the death-cry of her drowning crew. The most powerful sermon that can be preached to you to day, is not from the lips of a poor weak mortal like myself,—nay, it is from yonder rugged rock, and from yonder floating buoy!*

Is the sea, at this season of the year, generally calm and unruffled? Could it be more so *now* than it was upon that one fatal night, when so many of our fellow-creatures awoke, in startled terror, from the sleep of unsuspecting rest, to sink for ever—in the last, long sleep of death?

No storm beat over the unshattered sails;—there was no need for that heroic courage which saved the lives of so many in former years, and that, too, upon these very islands; there was no occasion for the

* The Goldstone Rock, on which the Pegasus struck.

imitation of *her* undaunted exploit, whose monument adorns these walls, and whose better record is on high;* but when they said unto themselves peace and safety, the day of the Lord came upon them suddenly, even as a thief in the night; and oh! how few of them escaped! Yes, beloved! the strength of manhood—the loveliness of beauty—the promise of childhood—the simplicity of infancy, have all found an unmarked and a common—an unknown and an undistinguished grave,—in the rolling abyss of these mighty waters.

But there were those who knew their Redeemer's voice, and had confidence before him at his coming.†

* Grace Horsley Darling, born November 24, 1815; died October 20, 1842.

† See an interesting account of Master Field and Miss Fanny Flowers, and others, in the September, November, and December numbers of "The Children's Friend," for 1842. Alas! however, all mention of their ever having been adopted into the society of Christ and family of GOD by holy baptism, and thus having become entitled to all the Redeemer's promises, is *systematically and purposely* excluded; and the whole account of poor little Fanny Flowers, like almost every other memoir in the Children's Friend, is at *entire variance* with the doctrines of the Church of England, as expressed in her Baptismal Service. She was evidently placed at a school under the control of Presbyterians; brought up in Calvinistic principles, and unacquainted with the blessed comforts which a belief in baptismal regeneration will always supply to the gentle and child-like spirit. But despite of all these disadvantages, who can doubt that she has been gathered to that Redeemer's fold, whom "having not seen, she loved," and for which she was so evidently ripening during the whole of her pilgrimage below? Still, as a clergyman of the English Church, I cannot but protest most strongly against the inconsistency of any ministers or members of that church circulating such a magazine as "The Children's Friend," in their parishes. The

And though we cannot but regret that some even of these had not been taught the way of God more perfectly, and had thus become the obedient members of the purest and most perfect branch of his own holy Catholic Church, to which he left every single promise of his word, and from which dissent is schism, and schism is sin,—(See Romans xvi. 17, 18,)—yet, my brethren, who can doubt that the prayers which were offered from that sinking vessel, by those who, if they were in error upon this point, were not, as we trust, in error *wilfully*, ascended up, as the last sweet offering of holy incense, to the throne of a redeeming and forgiving—an accepting and a sanctifying God? And doubtless, they have now accounted themselves as the LORD's own highly-favoured ones, to have been removed so early and so mercifully, from this world's troubled sea of woe, to a world where tears shall be wiped from every eye—to the peaceful harbour of eternal rest!

> "When the shore is won at last,
> Who will count the billows past?"

While, then, the tears may gush from our eyes, and our hearts may ache within us, and scarcely, indeed,

meeting-house and the church are placed in it always upon an equal footing, and baptismal regeneration is flatly and constantly denied.

"Burns's Magazine for the Young," is free from all these objections, and will prove a most wholesome and excellent substitute. Really to distribute such Tracts as Carus Wilson's "Friendly Visitor" and "Children's Friend," is perfectly suicidal to the church. The dissenters are far more wise and more honest. They *speak out*, and teach their children to do the same. Oh! would to GOD, we would learn wisdom from them in this respect before it is too late!

can they do otherwise, upon such a solemn anniversary, and its celebration in such a place, oh! my beloved in Christ, what a cheering, what a glorious consideration is it, that for many a one, as we may humbly trust, of that devoted crew, our tears are as much without occasion, as our prayers would be now without avail! The rivers of that midnight flood (can we doubt it for one single moment?) have indeed made glad the sacred city of God. An innumerable company of holy angels, a spotless choir of white-robed saints, have bidden a glorious welcome to the resurrection, hope of eternal blessedness, alike to the good and faithful servant, and to the gentle and the obedient child. The babe has been parted from its mother's breast, but only to be cradled in Abraham's bosom; and those who have gone before, have rejoined their departed relatives in that paradise of immortality, which, as one of the little sufferers so beautifully expressed it,* is better far than the Paradise which Adam lost;—a Paradise wherein there are no temptations;—a Paradise from which there shall be no fall. And oh! if we could only think so of *all* who sank like lead in these mighty waters, how consolatory would then be the recollection;—how full of satisfaction the thought! And with what joyous anticipation should we all look forward to that bright and blessed day, when the heavens and the earth shall pass away, and the sea shall give up her dead!

But, alas! my brethren, the utmost stretch of Christian charity will not permit us to believe as much as this!

* Fanny Flowers:—see "Wreck of the Pegasus."

And, oh! if any retired that night to a prayerless and unhallowed berth;—if any laid them down that night in drunkenness, or carelessness,—in worldliness, or unbelief,—in false doctrine, or immorality,—in heresy, or in schism,—in any sin unrepented of, in any sin unforgiven;—oh! my brethren and children, how fearful is the recollection to *us*, and how awful the consequences to *themselves!*

But we cannot trust ourselves to think of *this*. It is too tremendous, it is too overwhelming. Then from this most dreadful consideration let us all turn away, each one to the recesses of his own heart. Oh! let each one most seriously examine himself, and ask, —What would have been *my own* lot, had I *myself* been thus suddenly called away? Would my death have added fresh glory to my Redeemer's diadem, and the streams of that rolling flood made glad the city of God? Am I washed in his blood? Am I clothed in his righteousness? Am I treading in his steps? Am I a member of his holy Church, to which alone he bequeathed all his promises? Am I, even in this the busiest season of the year, most scrupulously keeping holy the *whole* of his appointed sabbath? Am I a partaker of his holy table, without which there is no life in me? Am I a constant searcher of his sacred Scriptures? Am I bringing up my family in his fear? Am I living to his glory? Am I praying for his spirit? Am I ripening for his kingdom?

Oh! beloved brethren, if you can really and conscientiously answer "Yes" to these questions;—to you, to live is Christ—to you, to die is gain. For if this be indeed the case, the Church of Christ is your vessel —the Word of Christ your chart—the Spirit of Christ

your pilot—the Sacraments of Christ your store—the Cross of Christ your anchor—and Christ's eternal Glory the peaceful haven, where in his own good time you shall for *ever* be.

But, oh! if *not*, (and some of you must know and feel that this is not, as yet, the case with *you*,) I implore you, for God's sake, and for your own soul's sake, to remember, from this day's solemn catastrophe, how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.

There is a flood which will *never* conduct to the land of Canaan;—there is a sea of fire;—there is a second death. And this is the awful portion, hereafter, of all those who forget their Creator now,—whose life is without God—whose end is without hope.

Have any of *you*, my brethren, been living in this most fearful state? Awake, I beseech you, without delay! Your vessel is sinking fast! Arise, O sleeper, and call upon your God!

Call upon him, especially, for those two blessings, which are, in fact, the very sum and substance of all other blessings besides,—forgiveness for the past, and grace for the future,—deliverance from a spiritual shipwreck now, and strength sufficient to right your vessel by and bye.

Oh! poor as ye may be, ignorant, and untaught, God—your own God—will not despise the sailor's cry, nor cast out the sea-boy's prayer. Before ye call, he will answer; and while ye are yet speaking, he will hear.

Ask, then, for the Saviour's blood, to blot out all that is past; and the Saviour's spirit, to sanctify and cleanse your sinful hearts for the time that is to come.

And, in order to obtain these two great blessings in richer abundance, draw near, this morning, to his holy table, to find his flesh meat indeed to support and nourish, and his blood drink indeed to forgive and comfort you.

And so drawing nigh to God, he will indeed draw nigh to you. And when ye pass through the waters, he will be with you—and the rivers, they shall not overflow you; and though the waves of the sea may be mighty, and rage horribly, yet with Christ in the vessel you shall weather the storm.

And at the last he will swallow up death in victory, and make you more than conquerors, through him that loveth you.

And when that last enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him;—yea, and the rivers of that very flood shall make glad the city of GOD,—and the angry swellings of Jordan's tide shall issue forth (all clear as crystal) into that pure river of the water of life, which proceedeth out of the throne of GOD, and of the LAMB !*

* Revelation xxii. 1.

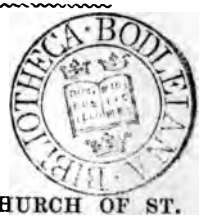
Shortly will be Published, by the same Author,

"THE MASTER'S CALL TO THE MASTER'S TABLE."
"THE STUMBLING BLOCKS REMOVED."
"THE ANGELS AT THE SEPULCHRE."

THREE SERMONS ON THE HOLY COMMUNION.

PRINTED BY J. RIDER, 14, BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE, LONDON.

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S REAL PRESENCE IN THE HOLY EUCHARIST.



A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PETER, EXETER,

ON EASTER SUNDAY, 1845;

By THOMAS HILL LOWE, M. A.,

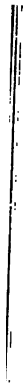
DEAN OF EXETER.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

EXETER: P. A. HANNAFORD.

LONDON: F. & J. RIVINGTON.

MDCCCXLV.



TO

F. NEWMAN ROGERS, Esq.,

RECORDER OF THE CITY OF EXETER.

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING SERMON

IS INSCRIBED

AS A SMALL TOKEN

OF UNFEIGNED RESPECT AND ESTEEM

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Deanery, Exeter, 19th April, 1845.

PREFACE.

It may be necessary to remind some of the readers of the following Sermon, that the Church of Rome expressly maintains that the glorified Body of Christ is nowhere locally present, but in heaven; and, consequently, whilst she asserts that His human body of flesh and blood, with all that belongs to it, as bones and sinews, is contained in the Sacrament, she is forced to admit, that it has no dimensions, and is not locally present in the consecrated elements; though what she is pleased to call the *substances* of the bread and wine are, in the very moment of uttering the last syllable of the words of consecration, miraculously converted into the *substances* of His body and blood. To the apprehensions of ordinary men, who are not versed in the subtleties of the schools, this word, *substance,* conveys the notion of something tangible and material; something which has a real, ascertained, and permanent existence. But, in the language of the Church of Rome, it is a mere *supposition;* an unknown and undefinable *quiddity,* which is assumed to be the support of those *accidents,* as they call them, of form, colour, &c., which belong to all material bodies, and are the objects of sense. It is a mere idea, a fiction of the imagination, so wholly unreal that it is impossible, by any effort of the intellect, to grasp its meaning, or to prove by any course of argument that properties, apparently the most contradictory and inconceivable do not belong to it. If we admit that this imaginary *substance,* serving as the support of the material body, though it is not locally present in it, has a real existence,

I do not see how we can refuse to admit the conclusion of the Angelical Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas,* that our BLESSED LORD, in instituting the Sacrament of His body and blood, may have actually held Himself in His own hands, and eaten Himself with His own mouth.†

I mention this because, in answer to what is said in the following Sermon, that our LORD's body of flesh and blood no longer exists, but is wholly changed into a glorified and spiritual body, it may be replied, that the *substance* of His body remains unaltered. Considering the no-meaning of this word, my readers will be able to judge for themselves what this answer is worth; and possibly, may begin to suspect that, after all, the Real Presence of the Church of Rome means no more than a Sacramental and Spiritual Presence; or, at least, that the arguments of her Divines and Schoolmen prove nothing more.

* The passage occurs in the *Tertia Pars Summæ Theologicæ*, of this distinguished Schoolman. In the first Article of the LXXXIst. Question the point to be discussed is this; "Utrum Christus sumpserit suum Corpus et sanguinem?" and this is his conclusion; "Christus, cum quæ aliis observandum instituit, ipse primus observare consueverit, non modo sui corporis sacramentum instituit sumendum aliis, sed ipsum etiam sumpsit." This conclusion he defends, as usual, by a series of arguments, in which he replies to the objections which may be brought against it; and of these arguments the following specimens may suffice.

"Ad primum ergo dicendum quòd in Evangeliis legitur, quòd Christus accepit panem et calicem; non est autem intelligendum, quòd acceperit solum in manibus, ut quidam dicunt; sed eo modo accepit, quo aliis accipiendum tradidit. Unde cum discipulis dixerit, accipite, et comedite; et iterum, accipite, et bibite; intelligendum est quòd ipse acceperit comederit, et biberit. Unde et quidam metrice dixerunt,

Rex sedet in cœna, turba cinctus duodena;
Se tenet in manibus, se cibat ipse cibus.

Ad secundum dicendum, quòd Christus, secundum quòd est sub hoc sacramento, comparatur ad locum; non secundum proprias dimensiones, sed secundum dimensiones specierum sacramentalium; ita quòd in quocunque loco ubi sunt illæ species, est ipse Christus. *Et quia species illæ potuerunt esse in manibus et in ore Christi, Christus potuit esse in suis manibus, et in suo ore.*"

† This may be regarded as a perfect instance of the "*reductio ad absurdum.*" From the admitted premises, that, in instituting this Sacrament, our LORD Himself did all that he enjoined His disciples to do; and that the Sacrament is to us precisely what it was to them, in the act and at the moment of its institution, most persons would think it safer to conclude, that as He did not, and could not possibly hold His own body in His own hands, and eat His own body with His own mouth, so neither do we; though we spiritually feed on Him, the true Bread of Life, to the strengthening and refreshing of our souls.

THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER.

1. COR. v. 7.

CHRIST *our Passover is sacrificed for us.*

These words, in which CHRIST is emphatically called "*our* passover, who was sacrificed for us," have so pointed a reference to that great ordinance which He himself delivered to His church, for a perpetual exhibition and commemoration of his death, that they were introduced into the most ancient liturgies, and were said, or sung, at the celebration of the LORD'S Supper; and though they form no part of our present Communion office, yet, as we are all strictly required to present ourselves at the LORD'S table at the great feast of Easter, and as the passage from which these words are taken forms the first of the three anthems, which are used this day in the place of the ninety-fifth Psalm, it will not, I hope, be

deemed inappropriate to the present occasion, if, instead of an ordinary Easter-sermon on the evidences or benefits of our LORD'S resurrection, I shall direct your attention to the close analogy between the Jewish Passover, and that divinely appointed rite which supplies its place in the Christian church.

The Passover was, strictly speaking, a commemorative ordinance, to be observed by the Israelites, as long as the Mosaic law should continue in force, in remembrance of their deliverance from the destroying angel, who passed over their houses when he smote all the first-born of the Egyptians. To the Jews it was nothing more than this—its typical character could hardly be discerned by them, and, perhaps, was scarcely guessed at. Even to the wisest of the masters of Israel it was but as an unfulfilled prophecy. We, indeed, know that it was designed to pre-figure the One True sacrifice which our LORD and SAVIOUR offered for us in His own body on the cross; as all the other sacrifices and oblations of the Levitical law, and not those only, but its priesthood also were types of Him, and derived all their efficacy and virtue from Him. For it was no more possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should, of itself, take away sins, than that the earthly elements of bread and wine in the holy Eucharist should, of themselves, strengthen and refresh the soul. As to the typical character of the Paschal institution, it is clearly indicated, both in the text, where CHRIST is expressly called "*our* Passover," and in every other passage in which he is

represented as "the Lamb slain," or "the LAMB OF GOD;" and that the correspondence between the type and the antitype extends even to the minutest circumstances we learn from that remarkable passage of St. John, where it is said, that when the soldiers had broken the legs of the two malefactors, who were crucified on each side of JESUS, and "saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs, that the scripture should be fulfilled—A bone of him shall not be broken." But we shall hardly see how exactly the memorial which our LORD has left us of himself in the holy Eucharist was framed on the model of the Paschal supper, unless we compare the accounts of the manner in which the LORD's Supper was ordained with the accounts of the manner in which the Paschal supper was celebrated by the Jews.

We are told by the Evangelists and St. Paul, that "the LORD JESUS," having first eaten the Passover with his disciples, "in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, or my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me." These expressions are so plain that it cannot be denied, and is not denied by any, that the bread which our LORD brake, and the wine which he poured out into the cup, were

designed to be representatives and memorials of His body to be broken, and His blood to be shed on the cross for the remission of the sins of mankind. To the above account St. Matthew adds, "that when He delivered the cup to the disciples, He bade them all to drink of it;" and St. Mark expressly tells us, "They all drank of it."

Let us now see in what manner the Jews celebrated their Paschal feast. The master of the house took bread, and instead of using the ordinary form of benediction, he brake it, and gave it to those who were present, saying, "This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in Egypt;" and precisely in the same way our LORD took the Paschal loaf into His hands, brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is broken for you; making use of the very same expressions as the Jews employed in speaking of the Passover, which they constantly called "the *body* of the Paschal lamb."

Again; after supper, the master of the house took the cup, and having given thanks, delivered it to those around him, saying, "This is the fruit of the vine," or "the blood of the grape;" and so our LORD took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood;" adopting in these words the very form and phrase which Moses used in ratifying the former covenant between GOD and his people; and you will remember that He called it *afterwards* "the fruit of the vine."

It would be easy to point out in other particulars the exact parallelism of the Paschal feast and our LORD'S Supper; but enough has been said to show that our LORD, in all that He did or said on this occasion designed to teach His disciples, that as the Paschal solemnity had hitherto been to the Jews a perpetual memorial of their great deliverance in Egypt, this Sacrament, which He now instituted, should be henceforth, to them and to us, a perpetual commemoration of Him, as our true Passover. For when we remember that He was addressing Himself to Jews, and that He employed the same forms and phrases which were used by them in celebrating the Paschal feast, the best way of ascertaining His meaning will be to consider in what sense those to whom He spoke must, of necessity, have understood Him. It was of the greatest importance that, in instituting such a rite as this, both His language and His actions should be free from all obscurity, and from the mere silence of the Apostles, not one of whom demanded an explanation of His words—as they so often did on other occasions—we may be perfectly sure that they had no difficulty in understanding that He meant this holy ordinance to be to us in the place of the Passover, for "a perpetual remembrance of His death, and of the benefits which we receive thereby."

But though the Sacrament of the LORD'S Supper is to us, past all controversy, what the commemorative sacrifice and feast of the Passover was to the Jews of old, we shall form a most false and inadequate con-

ception of that blessed ordinance, if we regard it as being nothing more than a commemorative rite; for the gospel is altogether "the ministration of the Spirit," and the Sacraments of the Christian church are, in efficacy and power, the very things which they represent by outward types and symbols. Baptism is not merely a sign of our Regeneration, but a life-giving Sacrament, in which those who receive it rightly are regenerated by the HOLY SPIRIT, and made the children of GOD'S adoption, and heirs of immortality. The LORD'S Supper is not merely an external ordinance, in which we commemorate the death of CHRIST, neither are the consecrated elements of bread and wine bare representations of His body which was broken for us, and of His blood which was shed for us on the cross; but together with them "the body and blood of CHRIST are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful." Not that they are locally present there, or any where else; for His body of flesh and blood no longer exists; nor that His glorified body, which is now in heaven at the right hand of the FATHER, is locally present in the Sacrament, or even represented by it. What the Sacrament represents and exhibits is, that body in which He once for all died for us, and that blood which He shed for our sins; and these we receive by faith, to the strengthening and refreshing of our souls, and cannot possibly receive them in any other way. When, therefore, we maintain that they are indeed received by the faithful, we mean that, together with

the holy symbols, in which they are exhibited and represented, we receive the full benefits of that sacrifice which He offered for us in His own body on the cross; not merely that He is brought to our remembrance, and that our faith in Him is strengthened; but that the pardon of our sins, and the fulness of His grace, are actually conveyed to us, and that He is made really present in our souls.

It deserves to be noticed that our Church, though she steadfastly maintains that this "CHRIST is thus verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the LORD'S Supper," has carefully abstained from asserting, in terms, His Real Presence in that Sacrament; though it is evident, that if He is really taken and received, He must be really present in it. We might believe Him to be present, whether He were received, or not; but we cannot believe that He is really received, unless we believe that He is really present. Concerning the faith of our Church therefore, on this point, there can be no dispute; but the grounds of her caution in avoiding the phrase are very plain. For the modern doctrine of the Church of Rome respecting the Real Presence of CHRIST in the Holy Eucharist is this; that the true Body of CHRIST our LORD, the very same that was born of the Virgin, and now sits at the right hand of the FATHER in heaven, is contained in this Sacrament; and by the true body they mean not only His human body, and all that belongs to it, as bones and sinews, but the entire CHRIST, both GOD and Man; so that

the Eucharistic elements are changed into CHRIST Himself, as to both His substances; into His flesh, His blood, His soul, and His divinity itself—all which are really present in this Sacrament, and nothing else, except the bare appearances of bread and wine; for the whole substance of the bread is changed by a wonderful conversion into His body, and the whole substance of the wine into His blood. The natural consequence of this doctrine of Transubstantiation, as they call it, is, that the Sacrament itself is to be adored with that supreme adoration which is due to GOD.

Now concerning this doctrine, which, if it be false, involves the worshippers in the guilt of material idolatry—without insisting on the many contradictions which are implied in it, and which are so gross that no man, I am persuaded, would now embrace it, except in the supposition of the absolute infallibility of the Church which enjoins it as an article of faith—surely this one consideration may convince us that it cannot be true; viz., that the body of our BLESSED LORD is now glorified, and no longer consists of flesh and blood; and though it is numerically the same with that body of flesh and blood, which He took of the substance of His Virgin Mother, and in which He made atonement for our sins, is, as to all its properties, as different from it as heaven is from earth, or spirit from matter. We know, for it is expressly revealed, that to make us fit for an immortal and heavenly existence, our natural bodies will be raised

spiritual bodies; that "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." We are also told that "the LORD JESUS CHRIST will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body;" and since He, as to His human nature, was in all things made like unto us, we conclude that His body of flesh was changed, when He passed finally from earth to heaven, as ours also will be, when we are "caught up to meet the LORD in the air," and to be for ever with Him. His glorified body no more consists of flesh and blood than that with which we hope, through the working of His mighty power, to be hereafter invested; for though His human nature was wholly free from sin, yet His earthly body was no less subject to death, than ours, and, consequently, needed the same change to render it, in itself, immortal. "Flesh and blood," cannot inherit the kingdom of GOD, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." It is not the *sinfulness* of our nature that makes this change necessary, in order to fit us for heaven, for then it is our souls rather than our bodies that would need to be changed, but it is the frail and perishable nature of the mortal body which makes it necessary that this change should pass upon us; and as our LORD's body, as to its substance and its properties, was in all respects the same as ours, and subject to decay and dissolution, though its perfect freedom from all stain and admixture of sin rendered it a fit temple of His GODHEAD, during the time that He "dwelt

amongst us" on earth, yet, when He ascended into heaven, it became altogether immaterial, heavenly, and glorious. And we likewise, if through the mercy of GOD we have our portion in the resurrection of the just, shall be changed in the self-same manner, though, both in body and soul, we shall have been cleansed from all sin by the blood of CHRIST, and shall appear in the Presence of GOD as pure and perfect as the Seraphim who minister and worship before His Throne.

We shall come forth from our graves, at the voice of the SON of GOD, with the same bodies in which we died; but we shall pass into heaven with celestial and spiritual bodies. We believe in the resurrection of the flesh; but inasmuch as our resurrection and ascension will be, as it were, one continuous act, our fleshly bodies will be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," at the last trump; and being invested with immortality, we shall be made like CHRIST in glory, and shall be with Him, and see Him as He is. He also rose from the sepulchre with that same body in which He died, remained on earth forty days after His resurrection, and during the whole of that period gave His disciples the most infallible proofs of His personal identity. "Behold," said He, on His first appearance to them, "behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have;" and for a further confirmation of their faith, He ate before them "a piece of broiled fish

and of a honeycomb;" and eight days afterwards made the doubting Apostle St. Thomas put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his wounded side. He rose, therefore, from the dead, and was seen and handled by His disciples in the same material body in which He conversed with them before His crucifixion, and in which He died. But when He ascended into heaven this "body of humiliation" was changed into "a body of glory;" and the whole course of St. Paul's reasonings, or rather revelations, on the doctrine of the resurrection forbids us to believe that a glorified body can consist of flesh and blood, or that flesh and blood can enter into the kingdom of GOD.

Now if this be so, the doctrine of CHRIST'S Real Presence in the Sacrament, by the conversion of the elements into His Flesh and Blood, is contrary to the truth of Scripture. But though we reject this doctrine, we stedfastly maintain that He is really present in the Eucharist, and that His Body and Blood are taken and received by the faithful in that Sacrament. We acknowledge in it a twofold Presence of CHRIST. He is figuratively and sacramentally present in the consecrated elements, which exhibit and represent Him to us, as He was at the very instant, and in the very act of His offering; and He is really and spiritually present, by the marvellous co-operation of the HOLY GHOST, in the souls of all who partake of those holy mysteries with a living faith and love. The Body of flesh and blood, in

which He suffered for us, and which is set before us in the symbols of bread and wine, no longer exists; for when He ascended into heaven it was wholly changed into a glorified and celestial Body, and consequently, is neither present nor received by us in the Eucharistic bread and wine; but His death, with all its consequences, is made present to our faith, and we obtain from Him, in the very act of communion, "remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion."

Nor is this all; for in this Holy Sacrament we have a most true and real communion with Him, both in His glorified humanity, and His Eternal GODHEAD. From the throne of His Glory, where He now sits at the right hand of the FATHER, He not only imparts supernatural grace and influence to those who draw near to Him in full assurance of faith, but we ourselves, by the power of the HOLY GHOST, are so incorporated into Him, that in the language of our Communion Office, "we dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in us, we are one with CHRIST and CHRIST with us;" or, in the stronger language of St. Paul, are "made members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

When, therefore, we kneel at the LORD'S Table, and the Priest offers and presents to GOD the sacred memorials of His death, and "JESUS CHRIST is evidently set forth before our eyes crucified amongst us," let us not, holy and beloved brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, confine our thoughts to the

Great Sacrifice which we there commemorate, but let us "lift up our hearts unto the LORD," and ascend with Him into the heaven of heavens, and contemplate Him, as He there is, in all the Majesty of His GODHEAD, and the fulness of His Power. And whilst we turn aside from that low and carnal teaching, which would persuade us that we cannot receive CHRIST within us, unless the Eucharistic elements are changed into the very substance of His Flesh and Blood, let us believe with the most undoubting faith, that though, as to His Bodily Presence, He is now in heaven, He is really present to our souls by the co-operation of the HOLY SPIRIT, and imparts Himself to us in all His fulness; even as the sun, though he quits not his place in heaven, sheds down upon us his light and heat, and renders the earth fruitful with his blessed influences.

And oh! if our hearts embraced this glorious truth, how should we press forward to this heavenly Feast! how should we long for it, as the support and nurture of our souls! how should we be drawn, as it were, into CHRIST, in partaking of those Holy Mysteries! how would our hearts gush out with love towards Him! how should we realise the blessedness of being, through our union with Him, the sons of GOD! how should we reverence our very bodies as living temples of the GODHEAD! and what manner of persons should we be in all holy conversation and godliness!

Exeter: Printed by P. A. Hannaford.

By the same Author,

SERMONS preached in the Cathedral Church of Exeter, 8vo. *cloth boards, 7s. 6d.*

A FEW THOUGHTS on the INTERIOR ARRANGEMENT of CHURCHES, 8vo. *sewed, 1s. 6d.*

Recently Published,

The PROPHECY of BALAAM, and other Poems, by MISS LOWE, Author of "Cephalus and Procris," "Zareefa," 12mo. *cloth boards, 4s.*

"HOW SHALL WE SING THE LORD's SONG IN A STRANGE LAND," a Sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, Exeter, previous to his departure from England, by the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of NEW ZEALAND, 8vo, *sewed, 6d.*

Nearly ready.

A Volume of SERMONS by the Rev. JOHN MEDLEY, D.D., Bishop of New Brunswick, 12mo. *cloth boards, 7s.*

MONASTICON DIOECESIS EXONIENSIS, by the Rev. GEORGE OLIVER, D.D. This Work, comprising a full account of the Abbeys, Priories, Cells, Collegiate Churches, and Hospitals in the Counties of Devon and Cornwall, from their foundation to their suppression, embellished with Engravings of Monastic Seals, will be published in June by P. A. HANNAFORD, Exeter, in one thick closely printed volume folio, to correspond with the late edition of DUGDALE'S MONASTICON ANGLICANUM.

Price to Subscribers, £3. 3s.—Non-Subscribers, £4. 4s.

The Publisher will be glad to receive the names of those gentlemen who may wish to subscribe to the work, as *early as possible.*

Grounds for abiding in the Church of England.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN HOLY TRINITY CHAPEL,

BORDESLEY, BIRMINGHAM,

ON THE MORNING OF

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity,

1845.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH OLDKNOW, M.A.

OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL.

LONDON: FRANCIS AND JOHN RIVINGTON,

St. Paul's Churchyard and Waterloo Place.

BIRMINGHAM:

W. HODGETTS, H. C. LANGBRIDGE, AND B. HALL.

MDCCCXLV.

SERMON.

PSALM XXXVII. 3.

PUT THOU THY TRUST IN THE LORD, AND BE DOING GOOD: DWELL IN THE LAND, AND VERILY THOU SHALT BE FED.

THIS advice, though never unseasonable, is especially appropriate in times of trial and perplexity. It directs us as to the course we must pursue, if we would have the guidance and blessing of Almighty God, by which alone we can overcome the difficulties of our earthly pilgrimage, and "so pass through things temporal, as finally to lose "not the things eternal."* Few, at some period or other, are without such trials. Circumstances come upon men, in which they know not how to act for the best; and, perhaps, there are none around them, to whom they can have recourse for aid and direction. But, however this may be, it becomes them, in such cases, to follow the advice of the Royal Preacher, which is almost the same as that of the Psalmist before us: "Trust in the Lord "with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own under- "standing. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He "shall direct thy steps."†

It appears to me, my brethren, that the words of the text apply very forcibly to our own religious position

* Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

† Proverbs iii. 5, 6.

at the present time. We are surrounded by a multitude of sects and communions, holding the most opposite doctrines, and following the most various rites and modes of worship. Of these, some would lead us away in one direction, teaching us that the Church to which we belong forms no part of the Body of Christ, and possesses no interest in the promise of His Perpetual presence; and others in the opposite, alleging that she has corrupted the simplicity of the Gospel, and retains no longer the purity of the faith. And there are those, who have been influenced, by one or other of these representations, to go out from amongst us; whilst others, who yet remain, have become restless and uneasy, afraid to go, yet not satisfied to stay, and on the watch, as it were, to discern elsewhere, privileges which they fancy they have not here. Now it shall be my endeavour, in this discourse, to show, that there are sufficient grounds for all members of the Church of England, to follow St. Paul's direction, and "abide with God, in that calling, wherein they are "called,"*—that, in spite of all discouragements, if they will only "dwell in the land, putting their trust "in the Lord, and doing good, verily they shall be fed" —fed with "the sincere milk of the word"—fed with the Body and Blood of their Incarnate Saviour—fed, so as to grow up "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of "the stature of the fulness of Christ."† In doing this, however, I am not about to speak of our Church, as though she were free from imperfection, to vaunt of her purity, and set her forth as "rich, and increased with "goods, and having need of nothing;"‡ or to draw any proud and insulting comparison between her and other

* 1 Cor. vii. 24. † Ephes. iv. 13.
‡ Rev. iii. 17.

Churches. We have heard already too much of such language as this, of which the effect has only been to fill us, as a Church, with a spirit of pride, to render us blind to our manifold deficiencies and abuses, and to make us "trust in ourselves that we are righteous, and "to despise others."* It will, on the contrary, be my simple endeavour, to show that she has with her the Presence of Christ, that she has in her the means of salvation; and if only this can be shown, then must it be the duty of all her members to remain faithful to her, thankful for the blessings which they have received through her, and obedient to the spiritual rulers whom God has set over them within her.

Now, surely, her very existence amongst us, in her present condition, affords, at least, a presumption of all this. Whatever were the consequences of what we call the Reformation, whether it brought with it unmixed good, as some would maintain; or unmixed evil, as others; or a mixture of good and evil, as others; we may infer, from the good hand of our God upon her ever since, from the condition in which we see her at present, that it altered not her essential character, but left her in possession of all the necessary marks and powers of a Church—a living member of the One Catholic Body. Ever since that event, has she been beset by open enemies from without, or by false friends within, who either ignorantly, or of avowed purpose, have sought her destruction. At one time—I mean in the Great Rebellion —she was, to all appearance, totally overthrown; her clergy, plundered and persecuted, cast out from house and home, and forbidden, under the severest penalties,

* St. Luke, xviii. 9.

to discharge any holy function; her Service Book, not allowed to be used even in private. But from this state she was restored to her former position, and with the increased love of her children, who had learnt to value her care the more highly, from having been deprived of it. Again, attempts have been made, more than once, to disfigure her formularies by the introduction of heresy, or the suppression of vital truth; but from all these has she been most remarkably preserved. Statesmen, too, have often regarded her as a mere political institution, have endeavoured to use her for their own wordly and selfish ends, and have exerted what power they possessed, to cripple her energy, and render her incapable of resistance. Still, in the worst of times, she has never altogether lost sight of her high and holy character, as the institution of Christ; and never did she feel more deeply than now, her possession of a ghostly authority, "such as "neither prince nor potentate, king nor Cæsar, on earth "can give."* A spirit of lukewarmness has at times come upon her, and made her too forgetful of the work that was given her to do, disposed her to lean upon an arm of flesh, to pride herself upon her connexion with the State, to look up for support to the great ones of the earth. But from all this has she been aroused, either by the voice of her own children, the rivalry of hostile sects, or the unexpected course of popular feeling and political events. We, most of us, remember, my brethren, the time when the powers of the world seem disposed to array themselves against her and cast her from them—when disaffection, or at least indifference, towards her was almost a necessary qualification for civil, and even ecclesiastical, advancement—when her enemies raised aloud

* Hooker.

the cry, "Down with her, down with her, even to the "ground," and her chief pastors could scarcely walk the streets without being exposed to insult and danger. And yet, from that very time, when, in a worldly view, all things seemed against her, has she appeared to put on additional strength, and with redoubled zeal and energy, go forth to her work, conquering and to conquer. Now in all this, I cannot but see strong marks of God's gracious care and protection, such as, were she not really a Church, a portion of that building, founded upon a rock, against which our Lord has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail, it would be difficult, or impossible to account for. Whilst the Protestant bodies, whether at home or abroad, which became dissevered from the rest of Christendom, at the same time with herself, or later, but retained not, like her, the grace of an Apostolical Ministry, have all fallen more or less into heresy, nay, some into positive scepticism or infidelity—whilst they have relapsed into deadness, or dwindled into insignificance, our Church has remained in doctrine what she was then left; nor did she ever display more evident tokens of life, more vigour and energy in the practice of good works, than at the present hour.

Thus, to take one or two instances out of many. Look at her endeavours to bring the whole population within the sphere of her influence, and provide them with the means of publicly worshipping God. We can, all of us, remember the time, when the consecration of a Church was a very rare and uncommon occurrence: now, however, scarcely a week passes, in which we do not read or hear of several churches being solemnly set apart to our Maker's service; whilst, within the last few years, zealous attempts have been made, and are still making, to in-

crease the number of clergy, also. Consider, again, her increased attention to the religious education of the young, especially of the poorer class. Though this point has, for a long period, engaged the consideration of many of her individual members, yet it is but a few years ago, that the Church herself can be said to have taken it up, at least on any extended scale; but now, she is, every year, increasing her efforts to train up, in accordance with her own principles, the children of all classes—to impart to them not only the knowledge which is useful for this world, but that which maketh wise unto salvation. Such are her works at home; and what is she doing abroad, or doing at home for those who are abroad? Why here, my brethren, whether we consider her endeavours to continue to the inhabitants of our colonies, the religious advantages to which they have been accustomed in their mother country, or her efforts to impart to the heathen, a knowledge of "the unsearchable riches of Christ," we have abundant reason for thankfulness and encouragement. Whilst, thirty years ago, we had, in our foreign possessions, but two bishops, we have now seventeen, and their number is being every year added to. Clergymen, catechists, and schoolmasters, are continually leaving our shores to labour in distant climes; and at this very time, through the pious munificence of a few members of our Church, a college is in the course of formation, to bear the name of him to whom under God, our Saxon forefathers were indebted for their first knowledge of the Gospel, and connected with him by its very locality,* for the education of men, whose work it shall be to go forth, as he did, for the conversion of those, who now sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

* It is to be erected on the ruins of the ancient Abbey of St Augustine, at Canterbury.

And what are the fruits of these labours, my brethren? Let one single fact be taken as a specimen. In the diocese of Madras, the inhabitants of ninety-six villages, in the early part of last year, simultaneously turned away from the superstitions in which they had been brought up, "cast their idols to the moles and to the bats," and sought admission into the Church of the living God. Surely, if God were not with our Church, her exertions would not be blessed with such fruits as these, and if He is with her, it cannot be otherwise than safe for us to abide still under her shadow.

It is also worthy of observation, that the Divine protection and favour towards the Church in Scotland, and in the United States of America, with both which our own is in full communion, and which may, therefore, in the question before us, be considered as one with herself—I say, it is worthy of remark, that the favour and protection of God towards these Churches, appear equally, or even more, evident, than towards ourselves. The Church in America, which, twenty-three years ago, had only nine Bishops, has now six-and-twenty; has nearly quadrupled her number of clergy, within the same time; whilst, during a period, in which the inhabitants of the country were but doubled, her members were increased four-fold; thus advancing with twice the rapidity of the population among whom she is placed. And the Church in Scotland, after having, for a long period, faithfully witnessed for the Truth, in obscurity, poverty, and persecution, such as, were she only a human society, would, doubtless, have brought her to nothing, has now lifted up her head, is calling attention to her distinctive principles, and receiving into her communion, many who have been taught to regard her with suspicion or hatred.

These cases, my brethren, are surely worthy of attention, as supplying an answer to those who say, (though it is difficult to understand how it *can* be said by any acquainted with the events of the last fifteen years,) that our Church is indebted for her efficiency to the support of the State—to her existence, in short, as an Establishment. Now, in neither Scotland nor America does she enjoy this pre-eminence. In the former country, another religious body possesses the privileges of the Establishment, whilst the Church occupies but the same civil position as any of the sects amongst ourselves; and in the latter, she is placed simply on the same footing as the various denominations by which she is surrounded, no distinction of a civil nature being possessed by one above the rest.

Such, then, are the tokens, which may be seen and read of all men, of the gracious favour and protection of Almighty God vouchsafed to our Church. But as we cannot fathom the depths of His Providence, nor certainly know why He does this or that, any outward tokens, taken by themselves, might prove vain and fallacious. Let us observe, then, for what purposes the Church Catholic was founded and established, and see how these are fulfilled by our own Church. It was, that she might be the "pillar and ground of the Truth;" the instrument of our being purified unto Christ Jesus, through His own Blood, a peculiar people, zealous of good works; the ark, in which we might safely "pass "over the waves of this troublesome world, and finally "come to the land of everlasting life."* How, then, does our own Church fulfil these all-important objects?

* Office of Baptism.

What helps does she afford to the attainment of a sound belief, remission of sins, and holiness of life? What are the means of salvation, which her members may find within her pale?

"We have" within her, says a holy Bishop, who lived in times of trial and persecution, when many were tempted to fall away from her; "we have the Word of "God, the Faith of the Apostles, the Creeds of the Pri- "mitive Church, the Articles of the four first General "Councils, a holy Liturgy, excellent prayers, perfect "Sacraments, faith and repentance, the Ten Command- "ments, and the sermons of Christ, and all the precepts "and counsels of the Gospel; we teach the necessity of "good works, and require and strictly exact the severity "of a holy life; we live in obedience to God,"—(would that we could all say this, my brethren!)—"and are "ready to die for Him, and do so when he requires us "so to do; we speak honour of His most holy Name, "we worship Him at the mention of His Name; we "confess His attributes, we love His servants, we pray "for all men, we love all Christians, even our most "erring brethren, we confess our sins to God, and to our "brethren whom we have offended, and to God's Min- "isters, in cases of scandal or of a troubled conscience; "we communicate often; we are enjoined to receive "the Holy Sacrament thrice every year at least; our "priests absolve the penitent, our bishops ordain priests, "[and deacons,] and confirm baptized persons, and bless "their people, and intercede for them; and what can "here be wanting unto salvation?"*

"As to the Catholic customs," says another Bishop,

* Bp. Jeremy Taylor.

who lived at the same time with the former, "our Church, "(so far is she from the love of innovation,) professeth "all reverence and respect unto them. Upon this "score, she still observes all the great and ancient festi- "vals of the Church, with great solemnity; viz. the "feasts of the Nativity, Circumcision, Passion, Resurrec- "tion, and Ascension of our Saviour, the descent of the "Holy Ghost, or the Feast of Pentecost, &c.; she still ho- "nours the memory of the Holy Apostles, Saints, and Mar- "tyrs, and hath days wherein to express this, and to "bless God for them, and propound their virtues to the "imitation of her sons. The ancient fasts of the Church "she hath not rejected; and, therefore, because she finds "a Lent, or solemn fast, before the great festival of "Easter, presently after the Apostles, universally ob- "served (though with a considerable variety, as to the "number of days, and the hours of abstinence on those "days) in the Church God, she recommends the same "observation to her sons, in the full number of forty "days, to be kept as days of stricter temperance, and "prayer too, by all those whose health, and other cir- "cumstances will permit them to undertake it. She "still observes the fasts of the four seasons, or Ember "weeks. She still recommends the two weekly stations "of the primitive Church to the observation of her sons, "Wednesday and Friday, distinguishing them from "other days of the week, by the more solemn and peni- "tential office of the Litany. And in the table of the "fasts to be observed, all Fridays in the year, except "Christmas Day, are expressly mentioned."*

We see here the means which our Church provides

* Bp. Bull.

for our soundness in the faith, our exercise of penitence and self-discipline, our continual advancement in virtue and godliness; and who shall say that they are insufficient? Has she not, by them, nerved an Archbishop and a King, to undergo, in her behalf, with the most exemplary piety and patience, a long course of indignities and sufferings, and at last to die the death of Martyrs? Has she not nourished and brought up many, whose holy writings and holy lives have edified all to whom they have become known? Hooker, and Andrewes, and Herbert, and Ferrar, and Taylor, and Hammond, and Ken, and Kettlewell, and Wilson, and Nelson—would not these, and many others, bishops, priests, deacons, and laymen, have been had in honour for their sanctity, in whatever portion of the Catholic Church they might have been placed?* And can we doubt, my brethren, that there are others, a countless multitude, many of whom, perhaps, were never "heard of half a mile from "home,"† whom God has, through her teaching and worship, her Sacraments and rites, "made meet for the "inheritance of the saints in light," and brought to "the "fruition of His glorious Godhead?"‡ Nay, are there not those at this time—we trust, a goodly number—whom He has stirred up and supported, through her ordinances, to "follow after holiness," as the one thing needful, to strive continually to be perfect, as He Himself is perfect? Do we not see within her, instances of zeal and charity, of self-denial and alms giving, of the most humble and unobtrusive character, sufficient almost, of themselves, to warrant us to conclude "that God cannot be wanting to

* In connexion with this subject, see also two beautiful and edifying little volumes, published by Burns, "Lives of English Churchwomen," and "A Memorial of Eliza ——."

† Cowper.

‡ Collect of the Epiphany.

" them in doctrine, to whom He is so gracious in life ?"* And from all these considerations, can we doubt of His Presence in our Church ? Can we hesitate to believe, that she has within her, all necessary helps for the attainment of salvation ? And if so, is it not our duty, in spite of all trials and discouragements, to abide, in patience and thankfulness, where God has placed us, and fulfil there the work, whatever it may be, which He has given us to do ?

It may, however, be said, and God forbid that any should wish to deny it, that there are to be found good and holy men, in religious societies which we believe to be external to the Catholic Church ; but as these, by our own confession, afford no proof of the approbation of God vouchsafed to them *as societies*, and no sufficient reason for the continuance within them of their other members, we can infer nothing of the kind with regard to our own Church, from the examples of holiness to be met with in her. But, my brethren, the cases are so dissimilar, that we cannot argue from the one to the other. The members of the various sects amongst us, would not themselves attribute to their respective societies, any *divine* character or authority. They look upon them but as voluntary associations of individuals, who profess to hold such and such doctrines, and observe such and such practices, not because they have been so held and observed from the beginning, or have, attached to them, any promise of God's grace, but because they commend themselves to the private judgment or taste of each one. To them a sermon is the same thing, by whomsoever preached, a prayer of the same efficacy by whomsoever

* George Herbert.

offered up, the Holy Eucharist, an edifying rite, calculated to excite holy thoughts, (and it is looked upon as no more,) by whomsoever celebrated; but the notion of grace or pardon being supernaturally dispensed through the ministrations of persons set apart to their office in a particular way—this they altogether repudiate. Those, therefore, among them, who have attained any measure of holiness, have done so, rather as individual Christians, than as members of any religious communion, and under such disadvantages, as in some sort to render them illustrations of the truth, declared by St. Peter, that "God is "no respecter of persons: but in every nation, he that "feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of "Him." Such, however, is not the case with the holy men, who have grown up under the system of the Church of England. They look to their Baptism, as to the source and fountain of their spiritual life; to their Confirmation, as that whereby they were strengthened with the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit, to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil; to the Holy Eucharist, is that gift of the Flesh and Blood of the Son of man, whereby they dwell in Him and He in them; to the priest's Absolution, as the act and message, whereby, if penitent, they receive pardon from Almighty God; and to his Benediction, as that, whereby, if they are worthy, the peace of God resteth upon them. In short, whilst the others would refer whatever goodness they possess to their souls' immediate communion with the Throne of Grace, these, though neither neglecting nor undervaluing any private devotion, have attained their holiness as members of the Church, and would attribute whatever is good in them, in the first place, to their reception and use of those gifts of God, with which she has been entrusted. The case, therefore, of the former,

affords no valid objection to that view of our Church's claims, which I have now taken; and I may add, that an evident difference may be generally remarked in the tones and degree of *their* piety, from that, which, besides having recourse to all the means of improvement within *their* reach, looks, for its chief support and nourishment, to the Sacraments and Ordinances ministered by the Church.*

But of this enough. Let me, in conclusion, my brethren, express my hope, that the considerations I have now brought before you, will be sufficient to establish you in the assurance, that the Church in which God has fixed your lot, is really entitled to your confidence and dutiful affection. We live, as I have said already, in times of trial and perplexity. Differences of opinion, even on subjects of the last importance, prevail amongst us to an alarming degree; whilst the debate and opposition, the rancour and intolerance, to which they have given rise, have driven from our borders, many whom we could ill afford to lose, and forced them to go in quest of peace and satisfaction, elsewhere. These things cannot but occasion difficulty and discouragement to many even of the clergy: how much more, therefore, it is to be feared, to some of *you*, my brethren, who have a right to look up to your pastors for guidance and direction. Now, in such circumstances, most seasonable and appropriate is the advice of the text. "Put thou thy trust in the "Lord, and be doing good: dwell in the land, and ve- "rily thou shalt be fed." Let us avoid, then, all com-

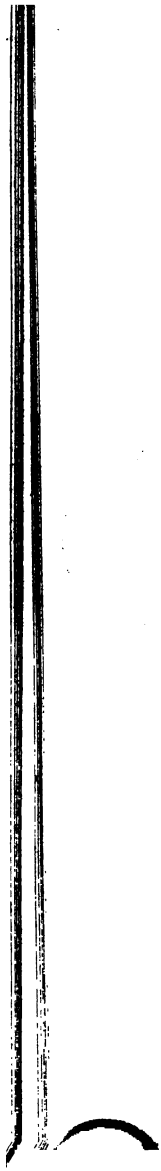
* I have heard it remarked by dissenters themselves, that when members of the Church *are* pious, they are generally more so, than those who belong to their own Societies.

parison of other Churches with our own : be they better, or be they worse, it does not concern us. God has placed us where we are, and possessing, as we do, all things necessary for salvation, here it is our duty to remain. But let us seek to strengthen our confidence in our Church, by considering all that God has done for her ; let us turn our eyes to the evident tokens of His Presence, with which He has favoured her ; and let us devoutly use all the privileges that she affords, and, so doing, go on in the calm and quiet discharge of our every day duties. If we stop short of this, we shall have no reason to wonder, no cause to complain, should we, at any time, feel distressed and unsettled ; but if, on the contrary, we attend diligently her services, communicate regularly at her altars, keep her fasts, observe her festivals, obey her injunctions, and, in times of spiritual sadness or difficulty, open our grief to some one of her ministers, in whose learning and discretion we have confidence, then our feet, we need not doubt, will be directed into the way of peace, our souls will be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and from a thankful sense of our privileges, so far beyond what we deserve, we shall confess, with St. Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration, " Lord, it is good for us to be here !"

W. HODGETTS, PRINTER, CANNON-STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

2

SERMON.



THE CHARACTERISTIC PRINCIPLE OF CHRISTIANITY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

EGHAM LOYAL MAGNA CHARTA LODGE

OF

ODD FELLOWS,

OF THE

MANCHESTER UNITY,

BY THE

REV. THOMAS PAGE, M. A.

PERPETUAL CURATE OF CHRIST CHURCH, VIRGINIA WATER.

"All nature is society—
All nature's voices—harmony;
All colours blend to form pure light,
Why then should brethren not unite?"
ANCIENT RHYME.

EGHAM: C. C. WETTON.

LONDON: LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMANS.

M.DCCC.XLV.

C. C. WETTON, PRINTER, EGHAM.

TO THE

OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

OF THE

LOYAL MAGNA CHARTA LODGE

OF THE

INDEPENDENT ORDER

OF

ODD FELLOWS,

M. U.

GENTLEMEN,

In compliance with your kind request, the following hastily prepared discourse—delivered on the occasion of your first anniversary—has been committed to the press.

I will not conceal the twofold pleasure which your requesting its publication has afforded me—as being at once the most satisfactory proof that my humble but earnest endeavours to give a right tone to your proceedings, were received in as kind a spirit as they were made; and also the strongest testimony you could in a collective capacity bear to the soundness and importance of those holy principles of feeling and of action, which I endeavoured to inculcate.

The avowed object which your fraternity has in view—viz. "to assist every brother who," with a valid claim, "may apply through sickness, distress or otherwise," commends itself to every benevolent mind. It is not, it is true, an object which comes within the circle of the distinctive doctrines or ceremonials of Christianity; but it is one which cannot be considered as at variance with them. Like a Hospital, or Clothing Club, or Insurance Office, or Bank for Savings, or Agricultural Association, or Society for bettering the condition of the labouring classes—its intended benefits are confined to the present world, and its actuating principle arises out of the wants and sympathies which all men have in common, rather than the peculiar tenets or rites of any Christian communion: but as far as its range of operation extends, it appears to me, like the above named Institutions, capable of conferring substantial advantages, which although secular, are perfectly consistent with the higher obligations and blessings of religion. Rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, is not to be confounded with, neither must it be regarded as an obstacle to, the proper discharge of the still more solemn obligation of rendering unto God the things that are God's.

If indeed there were to be found in the authorized statement of your designs and regulations any expression of hostility to Religion—in which I am a believer; or to the Church of which I am a minister, I could not give to your order any measure of public countenance—not because it goes not out of its proper sphere to recognize principles, which however sound and weighty are

irrelevant to the object it has in view; but because in pursuing after an inferior good, it casts contempt upon that which is of infinitely greater consequence—not because it is neutral upon matters on which it is not called to decide; but because the decision it takes upon itself to pronounce on such matters is so abhorrent to my own views, as to make union impossible without hypocrisy, and cooperation impracticable without compromise.

I need not say I have found no such hostile expression, either against Religion or the Church, in any of your accredited publications. Into the opinion or character of individual members, I did not think myself called upon to enquire; no doubt in your's as in all human institutions—religious as well as secular—elements of evil coexist with those which are good, and tares spring up together with the wheat. The part I was requested to act, had reference to you in your collective capacity. And I cannot but look upon it as worthy of all praise, that although the precise object which constitutes your bond of union is of a secular nature, you were desirous of hallowing it by a united act of religious worship, and that this salutary custom is commonly observed at the anniversaries of your various lodges. When therefore you signified to me your desire that I would officiate at your recent festival, I was glad to have it in my power to do so—for it has always been a strong conviction of my own mind, that a minister of the established Church can hardly be justified in denying the ministrations of that Church, whenever they are in a proper spirit solicited,

and he is in circumstances which enable him to supply them. Comprehensiveness, not exclusiveness, is the secret of her utility and her strength. The peculiar relation in which the Clergy stand to all classes and parties of which the nation is composed, makes it as judicious, as it seems to me incumbent, for them at least to be governed by a rule of judging which has the very highest authority—"he that is not against us is for us." Nor will they bring upon themselves—provided the spirit and manner and purpose be the same as St. Paul's—the merited imputation of unfaithfulness or inconsistency in 'becoming all things to all men.'

It now only remains for me to express my sense of the decorous manner in which the brethren demeaned themselves, when I had the privilege of delivering the accompanying sermon before them—my gratification at the harmony and order which reigned at that festive board you so hospitably invited me to attend—and my earnest desire, that when removed for ever beyond the reach of those benefits which your order has been instituted to confer, you will not be found to have lived and died neglectful of the "one thing needful."

I beg you to believe me

Always to remain,

Your faithful servant,

THOMAS PAGE.

Virginia Water Parsonage,
October 30th, 1845.

SERMON.

ROMANS, CHAP. XIII, VER. 8.

"OWE NO MAN ANY THING, BUT TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

IN this brief injunction we find embodied, not only a prominent point of Christian obligation, but a principle which is peculiar to Christianity; and which the grace Christianity supplies, can alone enable any man adequately to fulfil.

This principle has manifestly a twofold aspect and bearing—*negative and positive;* that is to say, it not only tells us what is incompatible with that duty to our neighbour which is enjoined in the gospel, but also what is necessarily involved therein.

Not to contract any debt we are unable to pay—not to engage in any fraudulent schemes of money getting, in which success to ourselves can only be secured by overreaching and injuring others—not to suffer the indulgence of the body, or the pride of life, or the customs of those with whom we associate, to betray us into any habits of expense beyond our means of meeting every just demand—this is the negative part of my text; and I need hardly say how well it would be for the interests of society, the cause of morality, and the honour of religion, if even this moiety of obligation, which undoubtedly rests upon

all who profess to be followers of Christ, were suffered to regulate all the dealings and transactions of men with each other.

But it would not follow that the precept of the text would be fully carried out into practice, even if such were the case. There would still remain to be fulfilled the *positive* injunction; while free from all other kinds of debt—to be constantly acknowledging and constantly discharging the debt of *love;* to be ever ready to perform the offices of kindness and charity according to our means and opportunities of so doing, as well as to abstain from every act or dealing by which our neighbour may be defrauded or distressed—the one as certainly as the other being necessary to the maintenance and consistency of our Christian profession.

So that we have thus exhibited to us, in both its negative and positive import, that valuable and comprehensive principle which is contained in my text.

Now concerning this divinely inculcated principle, I shall call upon you to notice two or three particulars.

First, I remark—*it is not the spontaneous produce of our fallen and corrupted nature*—yea, it will not I imagine be disputed, that it is by an opposite principle, that mankind, when prompted by innate feelings and propensities are most generally, powerfully, habitually, governed. That same act of disobedience by which man's heart became alienated from God—called forth a host of feelings and passions which are all of them more or less subversive of his love to his neighbour. In fact all the properties and qualities of his nature were thereby dis-

ordered and perverted. That became the first which ought to have been last—that the lord which should have been the servant—that the object of idolatry which is nothing more than the reasonable sacrifice which God's property in us, and authority over us, demands that all men should present as an acceptable offering unto Him. In short *self* became to the fallen creature, what God alone ought to be—what God alone can be. The history of the world since the fall, is in truth little more than the record of the effects and workings of man's selfishness. And not only do the crimes which inflict positive injury upon the person or property or interests of others—but many of the daring enterprizes, the brilliant speculations, the ardently pursued gratifications, aye and even of the highly coloured but superficial virtues, which have in all ages absorbed the energies, or excited the ambition, or drawn forth the applause of mankind, have, when divested of the glare and glitter which conceals from human sight the originating and impelling motive, been found but to swell the varied record of *selfishness*.

The man who witholds from his creditor his due when it is in his power to render it, can only do so from the dictate of an unrighteous selfishness.

The man who contracts a debt he has no reasonable prospect of ever being able to discharge, is influenced by the same unworthy principle.

The man who seeks to increase his own wealth and influence, by deliberately undermining those of another, can be under no higher an impulse.

The poor man who looks with an envious and a covetous eye upon the lawful possessions of another, and who, to enrich himself, would bring down his wealthier neighbour to his own level of poverty and privation, is unquestionably acting upon the principle of selfishness.

The rich man who prides himself upon his possessions; revels in his own ample means of enjoyment; lavishes his wealth in vain ostentation; and scarcely ever casts a commiserating eye, or opens a benevolent hand, or communicates of his own profusion to his destitute neighbour—can there be any doubt that such a man is under the influence of a mind-contracting and sympathy-destroying selfishness.

Nor must we stop here, for even when acts of charity are performed with an eye to self complacency; when relief is administered rather to allay the transitory feelings excited by coming into actual contact with human woe, than from a sense of our duty to God and to our neighbour; when our main inducement to do good unto others, that which gives zest to our endeavours and fixedness to our schemes for so good a purpose, is an overweening regard to the harvest of human applause or personal satisfaction—must it not be admitted that in this latter case as well as in the former ones, the actuating principle, however modified or disguised, is *selfishness*? And does not then the universal prevalence of this principle in its various shades and forms, afford the most decisive evidence of the truth of my position, that man, when carrying out the spontaneous promptings of his own nature, is a selfish being.

Here then we have at once both the proof and the consequence of man's sad apostacy from the original glory and design of his creation. It was impossible that God could have called into existence at the first, a being so utterly unlike himself. The brotherly sympathies and affections of the human heart could never have been thus frosted and congealed, until first deprived of the sun beams of divine love. Man could never have ceased to love his neighbour as himself if he had not first ceased to love God with all his heart and mind and soul and strength. The varied lines of his feelings and motives and affections, could not, until first detached from their proper and primeval centre, have been thus made to meet in that one ignoble point—*self*.

An observant mind will indeed discover, even upon the surface of creation, abundance of vivid testimony that for any intelligent and accountable being thus to live for himself and to himself alone, is not consistent with the instructive analogies which exist between the natural and the moral world. The sun diffuses his rays, the clouds distil their showers, the fountains yield their streams, the trees produce their fruits, the flowers display their beauties, and the birds chaunt forth their melodies, in such a way as to teach man—the intelligent inhabitant of a world on which its Maker hath inscribed this law of benevolence—that the blessings he has himself received, whatever their measure or their kind, are not for the sole purpose of separate and individual gratification; but in order that by diffusing them around, each one may contribute his share to the aggregate

happiness of the world in which he lives; and in exact proportion as any man fails in his desires and his efforts to do this, does he fail in rendering obedience to one of the most ennobling laws of creation.

But although Nature thus indicates the shame, if not the sin of selfishness—it is utterly incompetent sufficiently to counteract it; and this leads me to make an remark with regard to the principle comprised in my text—viz: that

Secondly. *In order to be duly influenced by it, we need to be spiritually renewed by that same Divine power, whereby man's nature was originally constituted;* the actual operation and exercise of that power being what we generally mean by the term *grace.* Sin has marred God's work—it is grace alone that can repair the damage it has sustained. Sin has made us selfish—it is grace alone which can completely overmaster our inherent selfishness. Sin has defaced the image of God, and grace alone can fully restore it. And accordingly, we have that same voice which, as recorded in the book of Genesis, created all things that are in heaven and in earth—announcing in the book of St. John's Revelation, "Behold I make all things new." To remedy the evils which sin has introduced into the present world, as well as to open a bright pathway to glory, and honour, and immortality in the next—is not only an incidental, but a direct and an avowed design of that gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. For this it provides by the most positive enactments, and to this it leads by the most powerful stimulants.

And although it is too possible to profess Christianity without carrying its precepts into practice; and to give a nominal adherence to creeds and forms, without any inward experience of that which gives them spirit and life—it is not on that account the less true, that the immediate and characteristic influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ is not only to make man at peace with God, but to bind together the hearts of men in one holy bond of catholic brotherhood. It re-establishes that master principle with which all that is good in the creature is associated—the love of God; and thus overthrows the usurped dominion of selfishness: undoing that which sin hath done, and re-doing that which sin hath undone. So that to whatever extent the grace which bringeth salvation wins its way into any man's heart and communicates its sanctifying influence to his outward actions; or in other words, in proportion as Christianity becomes a matter *felt* as well as acknowledged—practised as well as professed—will every such man be delivered from the idolatry of self, and made to exercise that charity which *seeketh not its own.*

It has justly been said to be the boast of physical science, that it can convert to beneficial purposes the wildest and most dangerous elements of nature. The triumphs of Christianity when it is genuine and vital, are exactly answering to those which thus distinguish the march of science. It curbs the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, and makes those very properties and energies of our being, which are naturally enlisted on the side of self against all others, to be pledged and

employed to promote the best interests of others, as interwoven with our own. The profane scoffer or the irreligious sensualist, may hold up to ridicule and affect to despise those "holy and humble men of heart," who take Christianity as their rule of action, as well as their warrant of faith and hope; but they little think while doing so, how different, but for it, would be the state of human society. Let those who have most deeply studied the chequered pages of the world's history, point out to us any other system or device, either in science, or philosophy, or ethics, by which the full tide of human sufferings may be more easily checked; or the dark clouds of temporal anxieties and forebodings be more effectually chased away by the cheering sun-light of a compassionate sympathy. Charitable laws have been enacted—lessons of kindness have been inculcated—but apart from Christianity, no corresponding fruits have followed. An eminent writer has asserted, that the Roman Empire even in the zenith of its power, and when Pagan philosophy held predominent sway over its civilized people, contained not a single hospital for the sick, or asylum for the orphan, or shelter for the destitute. Monuments of pride, of ambition, of vindictive wrath, there existed in abundance: but we might have traversed its mighty sweep, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, without finding one legible record or proof of commiseration for the wretched and the poor. And for the many benevolent Institutions with which in our day the world is blessed—to what are we indebted, but to that Christianity which enjoins upon all its professors to

"look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" and to owe no man any thing but love.*

And let it be here observed, that these and many corresponding precepts, stand not like dry enactments in a statute book—they are all backed by a divine impulse, a constraining motive and a stimulating example. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us, and this becomes the master principle by which every other is modified and directed—associating itself naturally and necessarily with the love of our neighbour. By exhibiting Christ's example who though he was rich, for our sakes became poor; and who when himself an inhabitant of the world he created, went about doing good—not only harmless, but generous—not only without increasing, but always mitigating human sufferings—it thereby prompts us to walk in his steps; bearing one another's burdens, and relieving one another's necessities. While by the amazing manifestation of Christ's disinterested love towards us—in bearing our sins; enduring our penalty; cancelling our condemnation; purchasing our pardon; and accomplishing our salvation by his own meritorious cross and passion—we are led to listen with ready minds

* I would not have it to be inferred from what is here asserted, that the support of such Institutions can of itself give a claim to the christian character or privileges; this would be to fall into precisely the error of those who restrict the scriptural term charity, to the mere giving of alms. All that is maintained is this—that wherever a knowledge of Christianity obtains, a clearer perception of the mutual obligations which men are under towards each other is thereby produced; which is itself an emanation from the gospel—a ray of its influence imperceptibly transmitted, and as it were conveyed to mens' minds in a side light; and that out of this improved state of feeling pervading evangelized communities, the Charitable Institutions referred to have sprung.—See note, on page 20.

and warm hearts, to his own most gracious words, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." Thus the feelings which Christianity imparts, are in perfect keeping with the duties it enjoins; the obedience which it exacts, is the offspring of the love which it inspires; while it supplies that only lever by the moral working of which man can ever be effectually raised above the world's heart-chilling and self-idolizing influences. And that its power in this respect, is alas! so rarely witnessed—proves not its inability to do this, when properly applied; it only proves the sadly limited extent of its legitimate and effectual operation. Man may thwart its designs; may refuse to yield to its dictates; but the truth remains the same—that the gospel of Jesus Christ, seen in its fulness and felt in its power, can alone supply an antidote as well to the moral evils which embitter the present life, as to the penal evils which unrepented sin will not fail to bring down, in all their crushing and eternal terribleness, upon every unpardoned transgressor in the next.

Thirdly. I have only one more brief remark to make, with regard to the principle which my text presents—viz. that *its aggregate influence in the world, can be felt only as each individual becomes imbued with its spirit, and governed by its authority*. And this truth narrows the subject into a compass adapted to our personal improvement. Admitting that the religion of Jesus Christ, when thus duly felt and practically acted out, is productive of those peaceable fruits of righteousness, which my text and numberless parallel passages exhibit: then it remains

for each of us to ask, with earnestness and honesty—if we are thus adorning the gospel of God our Saviour; if in our respective spheres of duty and walks of life, we are aiming to cultivate, and to exhibit, and to promote that peace on earth, and that good will towards men, of which angels sang at the period of Immanuel's birth. This cannot be, unless by the operation of God's Holy Spirit upon our hearts individually, we are made to "put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." This radical and total change effected—the principle of faith becomes a working principle, and love will furnish both the stimulus and the channel of its working. A man will never gather motives of action from any sources concerning whose existence and consequence he has not a living conviction. Faith is the only principle which can give the pure precepts or bright promises of the gospel, an actual subsistence in the soul—and until this is done, neither the heart nor the life can be duly biassed and directed by them. But when a genuine and an active faith has thus become, as a matter of personal experience, the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen—then does the spirit of gentleness and benevolence and love begin to diffuse its sweetness and its charm on the whole character and conduct. "We have known and believed the love which God hath towards us; God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." And thus, as Bishop Hall, quaintly, but strikingly puts it—"charity and faith make up one

perfect pair of compasses, which can take in the true latitude of a christian's heart. Faith is the one foot fixed immoveably in the centre, while charity walks about in a perfect circle of beneficence."

I have dwelt in this discourse, rather upon that spirit which it becomes every professing christian to foster and to manifest—than upon those specific objects which your Order has been instituted to promote; viz. to "assist every brother, who may apply through sickness, distress, or otherwise." It may be easily gathered however, from what I have said, that such an object is perfectly compatible with the spirit and dispositions which Christianity enjoins and produces.* Be it then your endeavour, while

* Christianity is a blessing to human society, not only in its immediate effects upon the hearts and lives of men individually; but also in its indirect influence upon the communities wherein it prevails—of which individuals may reap the benefit, without any experience of that special exercise of its power which is absolutely necessary to the formation or maintenance of a truly christian character. Accordingly, there exist throughout our own land, and Christendom at large, many benevolent and charitable Institutions, which — though not identified with any of the peculiar doctrines or observances of the gospel—nevertheless (as already intimated in a note, page 17) spring from that higher sense of mutual and neighbourly obligation of which the gospel gives us so beautiful a type and pattern in the conduct of the good Samaritan. Such Institutions are therefore worthy of support—not as being in themselves capable of effecting that great spiritual renovation in the heart or in the world which it has been the object of this discourse to show that Christianity alone is capable of producing, according to the divine prediction Isaiah lv. 11—13—but because if rightly constituted and conducted, they are subsidiary thereto; because moreover they furnish opportunities and means for the discharge of some of the subordinate duties which the gospel inculcates—duties which it is true a man may fulfil, while leaving those of more pressing and supreme importance unattended to; but duties, notwithstanding, without the fulfilment of which it is impossible that the circle of evangelical requirements can be complete. For examples of this nature I may refer to, 1 Timothy v. 8, 16. James i. 27. 1 John iii. 17. Hebrews xiii. 1—3. Romans xii. 17. 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21. Gal. vi. 2, 10.

The Order of Odd Fellowship—however liable to objection, from the singularity of its designation and possibly from some of its concomitants—nevertheless proposes objects which are expressly sanctioned by almost all the passages of scripture above referred to. It has reference to 'the chances and changes of this mortal state', and establishes a bond of reciprocal dependance and sympathy in its scheme for meeting them. It recognizes in the time of health—the accident of sickness; in the season of prosperity—the possible reverse of fortune; in the possession of domestic ties of endearment—the chance of their sudden and untimely disruption. And it calls on all its members to make provision for such times of need upon a plan of mutual insurance—whereby those who are fortunate

pursuing this praise-worthy object, so to demean yourselves, in both your collective and individual capacities, as to disarm prejudice and demand respect. And as your presence in this sanctuary this morning, is proof that as a body, you entertain no disregard for the services of the Church, so let all your conduct throughout, what I trust will in every respect prove your happy festivity of to-day, be the most convincing evidence, that you are not unmindful of the interests of morality, or the requirements of religion. While thus practically recognizing those great principles of life and conduct, which are of universal obligation, I feel authorized as a christian minister to wish your order "good luck in the name of the Lord."

enough to escape the anticipated calamities, have the privilege of aiding in the support of those on whom they fall; by which moreover the misfortunes of the few, are borne by an almost imperceptible pressure on the many; and charity is dispensed in such a manner, as neither to injure the contributor nor degrade the recipient—but on the contrary to verify the poet's beautiful description of its proper attribute to bless both him that gives and him that takes. Not being a member of the Order myself, I of course speak of its professed designs; I have evidence however that its practice is in accordance with its profession; for from the report lately published, it appears that during the last year (1844) the amount paid throughout the Unity, was as follows—

	£	s.	d.
To Sick Members.....	107,440	8	11
For Funerals, Widows and Orphans.....	62,742	11	6

A society then, which in a single year, has raised and expended the vast sum of £170,183 0 5, in mitigating the sorrows and relieving the misfortunes of human life, is not upon light grounds to be set aside as unworthy of public countenance. In the absence of all evidence of designs at variance with the order of society or the interests of religion—it is not to be spurned because it comes not within its peculiar province to assume the championship of either. Occupied in providing for, and supplying the temporal necessities of the sick, and the widow and the orphan, it lays not itself open to just censure for leaving to other means and instruments—divinely appointed for the purpose—the higher and more sacred responsibility of caring for the salvation of their souls. So that while in all faithfulness, I would tell its members on the one hand, that they may be complying with its regulations, and contributing to its ends without that bias and disposition of the heart to God-ward in which the very essence of personal and vital religion consists (1 Cor. x. 31.)—I would also, on the other hand, say to such as refuse to give it any measure of sanction or co-operation because it avowedly steers clear of all political or religious grounds of controversy—fulfilling as it does a very necessary, though but a subordinate department of human obligation, do not call upon it in violation of one of the most established axioms of philosophy, to weaken its power within its appropriate sphere, by unduly stretching it beyond it.

Nor can I doubt, that inasmuch as your thus combining together, affords facilities for mutual sympathy and support—helps you to bear each other's burdens, and to weep with them that weep—and encourages that prudent provision against future emergencies, and that feeling of honest independence and self-reliance, which is consistent with the most humble and entire dependance upon that gracious Providence, by which we are every day sustained and led; such a union—though not of a specifically religious nature, yet sanctioned and sanctified by religious feelings and motives—will tend to tighten the loosening bonds of society; to pour oil upon the troubled waters of clashing interests and passions; to neutralize by the pursuit of common, as well as reciprocal benefits, that sordid cupidity, by which man's selfish nature is too easily swayed; and thus to accelerate, rather than retard that predicted period, when, by the universal diffusion of Christian truth, and the triumphant dominion of Christian principle, the blessed lesson in my text shall be learnt and practised over all the earth.—"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another."

THE END.

C. C. WETTON, PRINTER, EGHAM.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

Just Published, in cloth, price one shilling.

EXAMPLE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

TO SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS,

IN

A MEMORIAL OF A DEPARTED SISTER.

"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, * * * a servant of the Church, * * * for she hath been a succourer of many."

St. Paul, to the Romans.

BATH: BINNS AND GOODWIN. LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO.

Also, in cloth, boards, price three shillings.

A LETTER TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD ASHLEY, M. P.

On the present defective state of NATIONAL EDUCATION.

"This Letter is in fact a book—not very bulky indeed, but clever and interesting: the work of a man who uses his eyes in his own neighbourhood; and does his utmost to dispel the ignorance he complains of."—*British Magazine.*

"A practical dissertation full of important information upon various points of the subject."—*Churchman's Monthly Review.*

"We are much indebted to him for his valuable statistics; for his conscientious calculations; for his deliberate opinions; and for his truly churchmanlike advice."—*Church and State Gazette.*

LONDON: SEELEY, BURNSIDE, AND SEELEY.

Also, in cloth, boards, price five shillings.

DISCOURSES ON TYPICAL SUBJECTS

CONNECTED WITH THE PATRIARCHAL COVENANTS.

"Often in thought, bold and original; always in diction free-flowing and elegant; Christ is preached in the way so peculiarly ordained from the very birth of his Church in Eden, and adopted by himself when visibly present among men—typically. It is not, we think, possible to interweave the emphatic language of scripture, more richly or more appositely, in merely human composition, than Mr. Page has done."—*Christian Lady's Magazine.*

"We think no intelligent and devout reader can rise from the perusal of these excellent sermons, but with delight and improvement—with sentiments of high esteem for their author—and with a desire in which we cordially join, that such a faithful ministry may be abundantly blessed—and that such a volume may be widely circulated."—*The Pulpit.*

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.

"OUR EARTHLY HOUSE OF THIS TABERNACLE;"

FOUR SERMONS

ON

2 CORINTHIANS v. 1—5.

PREACHED AT RYDE,

BY THE

REV. W. SPENCER PHILLIPS, B.D.,

VICAR OF NEWCHURCH WITH RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT,

INCUMBENT OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G., F., AND J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

MDCCCXLV.

RYDE:
PRINTED BY G. BUTLER.

This little Volume would not have met the public eye, but for the mournful occasion which drew forth the particular allusions in the second Sermon, namely, the death of one of the Writer's chief and most respected Parishioners.

SERMON I.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 1—5.

"*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*"

THE body of man is represented in Scripture under a variety of images denoting its construction and the various properties belonging to it. Amongst others, it is called a *house*, not only from the nice proportion of the several parts by which it is "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth," but because it is the habitation of an immortal spirit, directing, regulating, and controlling its actions. And yet

it is a house of a very peculiar character—it is not a house built upon the rock, against which the rain descends, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat in vain—nor is it even a house built upon the sand, which might remain firm were it to escape the violence of the elements, but it is, as the text declares, a tabernacle, or tent—a temporary, moveable dwelling, a poor habitation at best, without foundations, without any thing like firmness or solidity, taken down when its use ceases, or falling to pieces of itself.

We see, then, that the body of man, though described by the Psalmist as "fearfully and wonderfully made," is yet a frail thing—so frail, that the sacred writers seem to have exhausted the powers of language in describing its feebleness. And we need not tell you how much time is consumed in repairing and keeping up this insecure dwelling place, in supplying the necessities of the body, or administering to the luxuries after which it craves; surely you need not be reminded how all these are impediments to better things, how often they hinder the operations of a life of grace, and check the advances to a life of glory. If the functions of the body are in all their vigour, how often do they run contrary to the spirit and retard its onward progress to heaven and to happiness; if otherwise, if weak and disordered, how often do they lead to disquietude of spirit and to vexation of soul! All this the saints of old felt, and many a time did they give expression to the feeling, and that with an intensity which they appear to have reserved peculiarly for such a subject. This emphasis of speech

is very conspicuous in the text, and its general spirit opens an ample and an interesting field for our meditation in this and two or three other discourses.

What then does the Apostle say will become of "our earthly house of this tabernacle?" It will be DISSOLVED. There is much force in this expression, a force, which may at first sight be possibly overlooked. It tells us the consolatory truth that death is not a *destruction* or *annihilation* of the human frame, but only a *dissolution*, a separation, that is, of its component parts, which may again be put together by the same hand which at first formed them. On such separation, the body "shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it;" but that a reconstruction will one day take place the text also distinctly implies, and the body will then be placed in a position of far greater happiness than this world is capable of affording. This superior state of blessedness which God has provided for his people is also in the words before us signified by the emblem of a house, and yet one of an altogether different kind to the other, of which we have just spoken. Four especial characteristics are given of this latter house: first, it is a building, not of man, but "of God," secondly, it is constructed in a mysterious manner, "not made with hands," thirdly, it is an "eternal" dwelling place, and, lastly, its position is not upon earth, but "in the heavens." Heaven is sometimes called a "kingdom" by reason of its splendor and glory, sometimes a "city" from the beauty and regularity of its many mansions, sometimes, as in the text, simply a

"house," because God condescends to converse and to be present there with his redeemed servants, now become inmates of that happy abode. They are ever in the palace of the King of Kings, seeing his glory, and partaking not of partial, but of infinite felicity—infinite, because *there* is "fullness of joy," and "at God's right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Surely, then, Brethren, you will be ready to exclaim with the Queen of the South, "Happy are the men, happy are these thy servants, who stand continually before thee," and with the holy Psalmist you will joyfully acknowledge, "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be always praising thee."

The word of the Apostle, in the text, "*we know*," is a word of confident expectation and of assured hope in respect to the attainment of the promised blessing to which it refers. Such a humble trust as to ultimate success in the Christian struggle is of the utmost moment in bearing you up under the difficulties of obedience. Elsewhere St. Paul speaks of the strength which supported him amidst the labours of his missionary office. It was a toilsome life to go from city to city, from country to country, to undergo perils by land, and perils by water, and yet more, "perils by false brethren"—a blessed work indeed, but painful to flesh and blood—still that word "we know" was enough for him, as it will be for every one who, like him, "runs not as uncertainly, who "fights not as one beating the air." Nothing excites so much willing industry, so much ready and constant watchfulness in the believer, as the assured hope, that

after a few years of suffering upon earth, there is a crown of rejoicing laid up for him in heaven. It sweetens the cup of this world's bitterness, and allays the poignancy of its multiplied sorrows. When you know that every fresh step you take brings you nearer to the prize of your high calling in Christ Jesus, you will surely redouble your speed in running the race that is set before you. Doubt, like fear, is the occasion of of torment, nor can uncertain conjectures in respect to futurity ever afford a balm to the wounded spirit; this is only the result of a cheerful, confident, yet most humble expectation—"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

The assurance of the text also enables the suffering believer to pierce with the eye of faith through clouds of overhanging sorrow, and to see sunshine beyond—

> The darker is the avenue,
> More bright beyond Heav'n's portal blue;
> And if a cloud should linger there,
> 'Tis pass'd—Heav'n's gate again is fair,—

And by it he may be persuaded that he shall have better things at the hand of God, even more in number than evil things at the hand of man, and it points out to him a deliverance from the "bondage" to which "through fear of death, so many all their lifetime have been subject," yea, it enables him in some degree to enter into the spirit of the Apostles' desire, "to depart and be with

"OUR EARTHLY HOUSE OF THIS TABERNACLE;"

FOUR SERMONS

ON

2 CORINTHIANS v. 1—5.

PREACHED AT RYDE,

BY THE

REV. W. SPENCER PHILLIPS, B.D.,

VICAR OF NEWCHURCH WITH RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT,

INCUMBENT OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G., F., AND J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

MDCCCXLV.

RYDE:
PRINTED BY G. BUTLER.

calculated to raise our affections to high and heavenly things. The Word of God, which contains the charter of our future inheritance and which is nothing less than the publication of God's will and testament bequeathing to us such rich and precious legacies, that Word read and preached, or meditated upon, is meant to encourage us onwards step by step to the regions of infinite bliss. Over the consecrated symbols of bread and wine in the Holy Eucharist our thoughts must be necessarily carried forward to that fruit of the vine which our Lord promised to his disciples he would drink new with them in the Kingdom of God. Yes! all the privileges, all the blessings, all the graces attendant upon that most sacred ordinance are a foretaste of the glory and the joys of the marriage supper of the Lamb to be one day celebrated in the courts above, and the believer when about to remove from the Church militant to the Church triumphant, gladly exchanges even the blessings of the Eucharistic feast for the privileges belonging to that still higher and holier festival, which is to be kept for ever in Heaven. The result, too, which arises from the intensity of feeling spoken of by the Apostle will be found to be of the highest kind. What makes the Christian so diligent, so patient, so self-denying, so watchful? What but because he breathes after Heaven with so much earnestness? Strong desires give the greatest vigour to the soul, but when its desires are weak and feeble, the spirit of man is less able to sustain its infirmity, and sooner sinks under the pressure of temporal things.

The question may here present itself, how can the Christian be said to long for the heavenly state, as such a feeling would imply the desire of death, and death is what all shrink from, and life is what all cling to; nay, many a sincere believer, so far from "groaning" to put off this tabernacle of flesh is alarmed at the least thought of the dissolution of it. Doubtless, to desire death is not the Christian's duty, whilst to be prepared for death comprehends almost the whole of his duty.—Two notable sayings are left us in Scripture touching these two points. The one is by holy Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come;" the other is by Paul the aged, "I desire to depart and to be with Christ." The former of these faithful men felt, as all like them must feel, that it is a serious thing to quit their "earthly house of this tabernacle," and if it be fearful enough that the body should undergo a visible change, and all its functions be brought to an end, how much more awful is the consideration, that at the same time the soul takes leave of the body, and wings its flight to a world of spirits, finishing its state of probation, and entering upon a state of retribution. It is, therefore, the duty of every one patiently to await that change, to expect it from day to day, and to give diligence, through grace, to be ready for it, so that, when it does come, it may be a blessed change. And, yet, with all this there may be a desire, as there was with St. Paul, for such a change. Precisely as he felt, may all faithful men feel. To all to whom "to live is Christ, to die is gain"—death

being to them the end of all weakness and imperfection, and the beginning of all perfect happiness, the accomplishment of the most fondly cherished hopes. But was the Apostle impatiently anxious to seize upon the anticipated good, to reach at once the expected blessing? If it were so much gain to him, he might long to become possessed of it; but not so, he on the contrary expresses a wish to delay the attainment of the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus. His words are very remarkable, "If I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour," and again, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you." With such feelings as these should the breast of every servant of his Lord be animated. Every workman engaged in the service of his Heavenly Master, should still wish to labor and to see the fruit of his labor amongst those towards whom his ministrations are directed. It is indeed needful for the Church that good men should be permitted to pass as long a period as possible within it, and so long as they can glorify God and benefit their fellow-creatures, so long should they desire to toil in the vineyard of their Lord. And such is the power of divine grace acting upon a willing mind, that it will overrule any eager inclination for Heaven, while there is work still to be done on earth.

Many who feel the greatest desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from Heaven, are those in whom faith, and hope, and love have each had their perfect work, and these are precisely the persons who can be the least spared from among us. Alas! the

harvest is far too plenteous, and the laborers far too few to admit of any extensive removal of good men from the field of the Church, and although some of you, dearly beloved, who may be verging on the limit of life's utmost date may be inclined to sigh for so blessed a change, and although in blissful anticipation of it, you may be bidding farewell to sin and to sorrow, yet we ask you still to welcome life so long as one tittle of your Master's work can yet be done by you—to tarry here for a while longer—yea, even to be unwilling to lay hold of the brightly studded crown, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, is placing within your reach. But still you may continue unceasingly to contemplate that glorious investiture, to which the Apostle refers in the text; you may, day by day, hour by hour, be anticipating the being clothed upon with something better than your present habitation of flesh, and you may in holy and happy expectation be looking forward to the time when your spirits shall be freed from every thing which now pains and perplexes them, and when your bodies shall be changed, even unto the likeness of Christ's glorious body, so that this corruptible having put on incorruption, and this mortal having put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up of victory.

SERMON II.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 1—5.

"*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*"

WITH singular and melancholy propriety the resumption of our meditation on these words falls in with a portion of the duty which devolves upon me to-day—the duty, I mean, of paying a tribute of affectionate respect to the memory of an aged Christian who long held a conspicuous station amongst us, and whose earthly house of this tabernacle has recently been dissolved, that she may have, as I verily believe, "a building of God, a house not made

with hands, eternal in the Heavens. Amidst the wreck of pious usages—amidst the discontinuance of customs long held in holy reverence by men of by-gone days, this still remains, namely, that the Pastor of a Christian flock is occasionally called upon to perform such a duty, however painful it may be to momentary feeling, to point out to his hearers, how at one time in the circle around them, the full ripe wheat is gathered into the heavenly garner, at another the immature fruit plucked from the tree, or the budding flower nipped by the frost—to tell them how sometimes the approach of death is heralded by a long series of indications, such as the enfeebled body and languishing spirit, at others, how it seizes upon the coporeal frame full of vigor, and upon the immaterial spirit buoyant with energy—how to some it is "the grateful termination of protracted suffering, to others the unexpected messenger of a contest that is fought, and a victory that is won, while engaged as they thought in the hottest of the battle." It is a great mercy, indeed, for any one to have their life extended to three score years and ten or four score years, if such a lengthened period has been spiritually improved, if as age has advanced, the good fight has been fought more manfully, the faith kept more firmly, and the Christian course finished with joy. But if the providence of God do not grant what is usually called a long life, yet short as it may be, his grace may have caused it to be long enough, and the measure of the spiritual stature may have been fully attained. He has lived long enough who has done his work in this life, and is fit to enter upon another. What a beautiful

and strikingly appropriate metaphor that which is employed in the book of Job, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season." Yes! as in nature the corn is cut and gathered into the barn as soon as it is ripe, not permitted to stand a day longer lest it should it be shed and lost, so the Christian, when ripe for immortality, is gathered at once into the heavenly store house. "Our times (says the Psalmist), are in God's hand," and it is well that they are so, for however untimely in the eye of man the believer's death may appear to be, and "his end without honor," however much in the sight of the unwise he seemeth to die prematurely, yet in the sight of God his death is most seasonable, "he is in peace, and his hope is full of immortality."

From such serious, however ordinary, reflections as these, let us, then, learn more diligently the spiritual lesson—a lesson taught indeed in the very rudiments of religion—that whether no further notice of the dissolution of our earthly house of this tabernacle be given than the awful word, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," or whether we are mercifully forewarned to "set our house in order for we shall die and not live," or it may be perhaps more than this, and God may in his mercy, as he did to Judah's King, even reverse this decree and add to our life many more years; let, we say, all this lead us to be more and more firmly convinced that we know not what tomorrow may bring forth, and how foolish it is to say, as some people in St. James's time said, "To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a

city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain, for what is our life, it is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away," and how much wiser it is to say, as the Apostle exhorts, "If the Lord will, we shall live and do this, or that." Valuable counsel this, for alas, Brethren, how many have set out on a journey of pleasure or of business, and have never reached the journey's end, but have been suddenly called to "that bourne from whence no traveller returns." God has for the best of purposes left us in the dark respecting future events, and even in respect to the duration of life itself. We may know what we intend to do, but we know not whether it will be ever done. We may know with the utmost precision how long it will take the sun, "when he comes forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber," to run his course, but we know not how long the vapor which the heat of the sun creates will last, it may be scattered in an instant, appearing "for a little time, and then vanishing away." Such is our life, and in the sober and rational sense of the word, how little thought ought we to take of it, saying, what "shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed," rather let us "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto us."

From the earliest records of man's history, even as traced on the pages of inspiration itself, some notice was more or less publicly taken of the departure of good men from the scene, which by their religious graces and social virtues, they may have adorned, for them the voice

of mourning was raised, and a strain of lamentation indulged in, of greater or less continuance, according to the circumstances of the case; the annals of heathen nations, as well as those of God's people of old, shew this enough, and it was natural, if the former, whose dimly burning light pierced not through the gloom which pervades the valley of the shadow of death, when they saw the face which once beamed with joy now motionless and unmoved by all that was passing around them, it was natural, we say, that they should indulge in a passionate complaint which they could not, through any influence of religious principle, moderate and restrain. And if the latter, with their dim glimpse down the deep and dark perspective of futurity, sorrowed not as men quite without hope, we who live under the very tropic of the sun of righteousness, while we indulge in that grief, which I do not know to be any where forbidden, when "righteous men perish and merciful men are taken away," should yet weep more for ourselves than for them, who have been delivered from the burden of the flesh, and are in joy and felicity—who have quitted a world of sin and sorrows and snares, and who may themselves, for aught we know, have been secretly "groaning," and "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven." Yes! memory may delight to dwell upon the scenes in which we once mingled with those now taken from us, but the *past* is not all we are to reflect upon, the *future* must be taken into account—we must feel that they who have died in Christ have already passed the veil, and, one step more, the Holy of Holies is reached, and the prize of their

high calling gained—one step more, and they have "come to Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." "I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors." "Yes (as it has been beautifully said), as on the battle plain the dying warrior lifts his mangled form to catch the echo of victory from afar, so the dying saint stretches forth beyond himself into the distant future, and catches the joyous sounds which vibrate on the angelic harp in token that another soul has fought the fight, and won the crown."

Amongst, then, the blessed dead—blessed because they have died in the Lord—we believe her to be, whose removal from amongst us, in a worldly point of view, we are now deploring. She was a faithful Christian, and a sound Churchwoman, not taking her views, either of doctrine or discipline, from any exciting topics of the day, but rendering that cheerful obedience which the Holy Church exacts from all her children. As a Wife, she "loved, cherished, and obeyed;" as a Mother, she brought up her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The poor were her adopted family, she "gave much alms to the people," and, no doubt, "her alms and her prayers have gone up as a memorial before God." Of one munificent act for the poor so much has

been at different times stated, that I would rather pass it over in silence; suffice it to say, that by the Poor Man's Church, now in progress of building in this town, she "being dead, yet speaketh."

We now proceed to the further consideration of our text, leaving you to make any application of the spirit of our remarks which you may think fitting to the case of "our dear sister here departed," and whose mortal remains we committed to the ground on Wednesday last, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

The next assertion of the Apostle is, "If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." The Holy Spirit seems to delight in the use of this metaphor. The figurative expression here used is found in many parts of Scripture. What a striking word is that of the prophet Isaiah, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." Yes, Christ has, indeed, invested his Church by clothing it with *justification* and *sanctification*, and that such holy investiture is made up of these two parts is clear from many declarations in the Word of Truth. The beloved disciple pronounces this clothing to be the "righteousness of the

saints." What a solemn and awakening truth then presents itself here! They only shall be clothed with the garments of salvation hereafter who are covered with the robe of righteousness now, they, who through the righteousness of faith in Christ, are commended to God's favor, and by the sanctification of the Spirit have God's image renewed upon them—that image so defaced, yet not altogether obliterated by the fall—they form the Church, the spouse of Christ, in general, and, in particular, are decked as priests of the Church, specially employed in his service, and holding unceasing communion with him in his word and in his sacraments. Happy beings they! not only spectators of the marriage supper of the Lamb, but highly privileged, highly honored guests, all eating the same spiritual meat, and all drinking the same spiritual drink—constituting the Holy Church throughout the world, the mystical body of Christ. We read again of "putting on Christ," and lest there should be any mistake or misapprehension as to the nature of this investiture, the Apostle's comments upon it are, "and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," "walk honestly as in the day," "cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light." We hear of the believer being clothed with the gifts of the Spirit, for two purposes—that they should be ornaments of grace, and an armour of defence, he being arrayed, as it were, not only for shew, but for combat, and thus enabled with the breast-plate of righteousness, with the shield of faith, with the helmet of salvation, and with the sword of the Spirit,

to fulfil his baptismal engagement, to fight manfully against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant to his life's end. Lastly, we need not remind you of the "wedding garment," without which no one can be admitted to the marriage feast, whether it be celebrated in grace or in glory. This clothing is the combination of every Christian virtue, for whether with one early Father of the Church, we interpret it to be "faith," or with another "charity," in such distinction there is no real difference. "Methinks (says, and beautifully says, one of our old divines) the disputation held up this day in the world with so much eagerness and heat is uncharitable, whether should have precedency, faith or good works, whether is the better piece to put into a garment? and as uncharitable, so unnecessary, Why should I question which is the best piece, when the want of either spoils the garment? When both reflect upon each other by a mutual dependance, why talk of priority? Heat furthers motion, and motion increases heat. Faith begins good works, good works elevate and quicken and exalt faith, give it growth as it were, promote and further it, not in the act of justification, but in the knowledge of God, in the contemplation of his majesty and his goodness, in the dilating and enlargement of our love and devotion. Faith is the mother of good works, and good works are the nurse of faith. Can you separate light from a burning taper? or brightness from the flame? then may you divide Faith and Charity. A good work without faith

is a worthless action, and faith without works is dead. The Protestants (as saith Bellarmine) do not deny repentance and good works, and our charity will say, the Papists do not cashier faith. Let us take them both and make them up, like Christ's garment, into a seamless coat, and the question is stated, the controversy is at an end." So felt and spoke a faithful son of the English Church no less than two hundred years ago, as I believe you would feel and speak were occasion required; and now, in concluding this part of our subject, we would indulge but in one or two further serious remarks.

The pardon of the cross is indeed a plenary pardon, and, as the service of your much-loved Church told you on the first day of this most sacred season, yes, told you, in words of the Holy Spirit's own inditing, though your sins be as red as scarlet they may be made as white as snow, and though they be like purple yet they shall be made white as wool; yet remember how and on what terms this amnesty is proclaimed by the King of Heaven to his rebellous subjects; it is, if with a perfect and true heart they turn unto him; it is, however darkness may have covered them, that they now believe in the light and walk in the light. O, it is a fearful thing to have fallen into the hands of the living God by the commission of any one soul-destroying sin, and that sin will still be the sinner's ruin, unless worthily lamenting his guilt and acknowledging his wretchedness, he prays for remission and forgiveness, and seeks to bring forth fruits meet for such deeply-seated heartfelt repentance.

Therefore, dearly beloved Brethren, take heed betime

while the day of salvation lasteth, for the night is fast coming when none can work. Remember that however full may be the robe of Christ's righteousness, it was never known to cover, and never will be known to cover, one unrighteous, unrepentant, unconverted sinner. The Apostle tells us that such a man is *twice dead*, and what avails the richest apparel to him in whom the pulse of life no longer beats. The bridegroom's dress would be to him splendid mockery. The bride's jewels would only bring out in bolder relief the havoc which the destroyer has made in "dissolving the earthly house of this tabernacle." My heart's desire, then, and prayer to God for you is, that you may be so "clothed" in the day of trial, that you may not be found "naked" in the day of recompence. May your "clothing" be, as the Psalmist speaks, of wrought gold, made up of faith and hope and love. May the combination of such graces strike the eyes of the beholder, awaken his desires, and stimulate his exertions in the cause of God and goodness. Remember that it is the sight of the believer being so "clothed" which will remind others of the wedding feast being ready and all things prepared. The giver of every good and perfect gift would have his benefits extended by you to others in proportion as they are dispensed to you; he would have the grain of mustard seed grow up to a large tree that many a weary soul may take shelter under it, and desire support and strength from it; he would see his faithful ones, not only to be as beacon lights, "burning and shining" in themselves, but giving light to others, warning them to steer

clear of the rocks of offence, on which, if they strike, they may make shipwreck of their faith, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. May, then, grace be given to you to know and to feel that they who be wise, in the wisdom which is from above, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.

SERMON III.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 1—5.

"*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*"

WHEN our first parents were apparelled in the robe of that innocency, with which it pleased Almighty God to invest them, every thing was bright and cheering to their view, the feeling of shame was unknown to them, but, when by the fall they lost their integrity and peace of mind together, and became divested of that spiritual clothing, then neither could they appear in the presence of God, or each other, without sadness and confusion of

face. As it was with them, so it is with their descendants; holiness and happiness are inseparably connected, sin drives us from the presence of God, and embitters the enjoyments of domestic and social life. How important, then, that the hypothetical case of the text should be realised to us, "If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked;" and my heart's desire, Brethren, is, that for you may be fulfilled the Psalmist's prayer, "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy:" that is, that believers, who are denominated by St. Peter "a chosen priesthood," "a royal priesthood," should, "through grace, be invested with righteousness as with a garment, and be both covered and adorned with a robe of inviolable sanctity, and that for so blessed a gift spiritual joy may fill their hearts, and break forth in songs of praise to the Lord God of Israel."

Pursuing then the train of thought, in which we were engaged last Sunday, we would remark, that the believer's "clothing" is clearly defined in Holy Scripture. The garment required of all who would appear as worthy guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb must not be a garment of human fashioning, but of divine providing; our obedience must be a prescribed obedience, it must be regular and uniform, it must be fitting in every part, it must be universal. In "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ," the investiture, as far as any approach can be made by human weakness to Divine perfection, must be with all the graces of his character, his love, his patience, and his great humility.

So clad, what need the believer fear? Does he tremble before the "stormy wind and tempest," the temptations, the dangers, and the many fiery trials of this mortal life? Here is clothing which shall be "for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and rain."

We have already observed that the Holy Spirit seems to delight in the metaphorical language of the text; and if we turn to the last page of the sacred annals, we have that melancholy picture drawn of the destitute condition of the church of Loadicea, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, I have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor, and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayst be rich, and white raiment that thou mayst be clothed." Poor they were indeed, having made no provision for their immortal souls, burdened with an overwhelming debt due to the justice of God, and to all the requisitions of his most holy law; blind they were, for they could not see their spiritual danger, and blinder still because they thought they saw, the very light that was in them was darkness, and then how great must have been that darkness! They could not see Christ, though "evidently set forth crucified before them;" they could not see God by faith, though he was ever present with them; they could not see death, though it was just before them; they could not look into eternity, although they were standing upon the very brink of it. Naked they were, without cloth-

ing, without covering for their souls, having neither the garment of justification, nor the robe of sanctification, those two chief parts, as we said before, which make up that holy investiture. But, thanks be to God, there is a still, small voice succeeding the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, in which indeed the Lord is, and to that voice we earnestly entreat you to listen. We ask you to take that counsel which the Holy Spirit so graciously proffers. If you are poor in the graces of the Spirit, he offers to you the true riches; he tells you from what mine they are to be dug out; if you are blind to the beauties of holiness, he offers to restore your spiritual vision, and to enable you to say, with that once-favored object of his mercy, "This I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," and in whatever other respects you may feel yourselves spiritually destitute, a most ample provision is made for you, if you will accept it on the only terms on which it is offered, faith in Christ and in his precious promises, heartfelt sorrow for sin, earnest resolution to forsake sin, stedfast determination, through grace, to pursue the paths of holiness and virtue. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Yes, Brethren, as by the attribute of his omniscience, God *cannot* be "deceived," so in the exercise of his justice, he *will not* be "mocked." He is pleased to lay down the plain positive precept, that as is our con-

duct now, so will be our condition hereafter. "The life which now is," is the seed time, "the life which is to come" is the "harvest;" they who sow to the flesh, they who live a self-indulgent and ungodly life, must expect fruit corresponding to such corrupting influences —a poor, wretched, short-lived satisfaction now, utter ruin and misery hereafter. On the other hand, "they who sow to the spirit," who, under the guidance of divine grace, live a holy and virtuous life, a life of devotedness to God, and of usefulness to man, have the truest comfort during their present course, and will have, through Christ's services and merits, eternal happiness at the end of it.

Two distinct limitations, then, are fixed in the Scripture which we are now considering: first, that the putting on of heavenly glory, or, as the Apostle expresses it, "being clothed upon with their house which is from Heaven," belongs only to the faithful; and, secondly, that such only can earnestly desire, or "groan," to be so clothed. Why, then, is this latter limit so placed? It is, because none but they have a right to look for, or are in a condition to enjoy it. The transition from an earthly state to an heavenly one requires, as a necessary previous qualification, that they glorify God by the righteousness which is of faith, for corruption cannot inherit incorruption, and the soul which is not conscious of possessing such qualification cannot sigh for those spiritual enjoyments to which such a change would at once translate them. "Little children," says the beloved disciple, "abide

in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." Here is the great secret of the whole matter! Sin creates the fear of approaching a holy God; holiness produces a sacred confidence. Shame necessarily implies the fear of rebuke; the fear of rebuke from the great Judge of all the world, must be the most fearful of all. They only then whom our Church denominates God's blessed saints, blessed because, through virtuous and godly living, they come to those unspeakable joys, which are prepared for those who unfeignedly love God, have cast upon them the white raiment, which proves the passport into the new Jerusalem. They approach those walls of salvation and those gates of praise with a holy confidence, that maketh them not ashamed to meet their God. To use our Lord's own striking words, "They lift up their heads, because their redemption draweth nigh." But the unrepentant and unconverted shall indeed be ashamed before Him at that awful hour; ashamed of themselves, ashamed of their unbelief, of their folly and ingratitude, and therefore of their utter destitution. Yes! as said He who spake as never man spake, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy Angels."

May to you, then, dearly beloved, belong that choicest of earthly blessings, "a good conscience;" may it bear testimony to your uniform and self-denying obedience.

It was, you know, Hezekiah's happy privilege to be able to say, "Remember, Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart." The witness of that unerring monitor was, that notwithstanding the many frailties and infirmities which had clung to him, as they will ever cling to the best of men, he had yet, in the execution of his high trust as the monarch of a great people, "done justice, loved mercy, and walked humbly with his God." He asked no reward for his good services, but only begged that God would remember, not how he had reformed his kingdom, not how he had taken away the high places, purified the temples, and revived neglected ordinances, but what was "better than all burnt offerings and sacrifices;" how he had endeavored to keep innocency, and to take heed to the thing which was right. The plea of uprightness of character was presented at the bar of Heaven, that plea was heard and answered. The pangs of an accusing conscience are the first gnawing of the worm that never dieth, the testimony of an approving conscience is a prelude to the joys of the blessed.

The spirit, then, of our text presses on us the necessity of preparing for that time when our change shall come, to seek such an interest in the saving truths of the Gospel that we may, with comfort, expect and even long for so blessed a period. It tells us of some search being made, and some finding which succeeds the search. This necessarily intimates the possibility of a surprise. Death and judgment may break in upon us sooner than

we are aware. The day of the Lord may, nay, we are assured, will come as a thief in the night. "Occupy," then, in the great business of religion till your Lord doth come, for blessed is that servant whom when his Lord cometh, he shall find so doing. To realise the fond wish of the Apostle, let it be your earnest endeavor to be found of him now so "clothed," that hereafter you "shall not be found naked," remembering that the destitution which finds you at death, will follow you to judgment, and continue with you through eternity. May your "clothing" be of one firm consistent texture, yea, like the robe of your Divine Master, "without seam, woven from the top throughout," not obedience to this command, because it falls in with your personal convenience, and disobedience to another, because it is painful to flesh and blood to perform. Let not your faith be enfeebled by any confidence in the uncertain things of this life, let your hope be that which maketh not ashamed, let your love be without dissimulation. Having on a spiritual clothing such as this, you will be indeed invited to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven.

No time is left us for any thing like a due consideration of the remaining part of our text, we will therefore only just open the way for our future remarks on it.

"For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." Here St. Paul goes on to explain the nature of that earnest desire which the good and faithful Christian

feels to become possessed of the future and eternal inheritance of the saints of light. There is here a double desire expressed, one of nature, the other of grace; the first, a desire to depart and become released from present suffering, the other, a desire to depart and be with Christ in future glory. That the latter was the object of the Apostle's intense feeling is clear, not only from similar expressions to which he gives utterance in other parts of his writings, but from the very words here used, "not for that we should be unclothed, but clothed upon," and that it was not so much a weariness of the present life, as the hope of enjoying the next. The body may be a burden to the believer, yet he is willing still to bear it, if it can be serviceable to the cause of his heavenly master, if "to abide in the flesh" be at all "needful" for his brethren in the world. He, like other men, may naturally shun death, but the fear of it will be, in a great measure, overcome, by the confident expectation that happiness awaits him beyond the grave; therefore, he desires not to be "unclothed," but to be "clothed upon;" it is as though we lived in a house which had been for a long time our much-loved home, but which is now rapidly crumbling to decay, we should not wish to part with it altogether, but only to build it up of more solid and secure material. It needs no voice from heaven to tell us that our present state is an afflicted state, full of cares and sorrows, ills, either real or imaginary, pressing heavily upon us—a state replete with disquietude of soul and vexation of spirit. No angel's message is required to tell us of the

indwelling and of the outbreaking of sin, but it does require something more than human admonition to induce us to apply these sad truths to our spiritual well being, to convince us how foolish we are not to be more careful to improve the knowledge of them, not to learn that lesson, most difficult to learn, that a great portion of our sorrows and miseries arises from the fact that we do not divest ourselves sufficiently of our attachment to the things of this lower world. The good man, and you well know, Brethren, what I mean by the term good, for no one is good, except God—is of like passions with other men, nature is the same in him as in others. Nor is grace meant to destroy, but only to modify the feelings of nature. Jesus Christ himself had his fears, his tears, and strong cryings, and therefore his disciples, however far advanced in Christian graces, cannot expect freedom from pain and suffering. Indeed, sometimes pain and suffering may be felt by them more keenly than by other men, because grace renders the heart more tender, and causes the gracious soul to be affected more sensibly. It needs, too, that the affliction be felt, that it may be improved and sanctified, and God's faithful servants being filled with more serious apprehensions in respect to their present and future condition, than the sons and daughters of carelessness and ease, they must have a more acute sense of it. Possessed of a meeker spirit, they sooner experience a sense of their Father's displeasure, and lay it more to heart, than those careless ones who laugh away their sorrows. There is more hewing of the stone in-

tended for the palace, than of the stone intended for the cottage, and the vine is cut and pruned, while the bramble is suffered to grow luxuriantly wild. Blessed be God, who thus corrects us as his children, and chastens us as his loved ones, and may we have grace to avoid running into either of the extremes against which the Apostle cautions us, "not to despise the chastening of the Lord, nor to faint when we are rebuked of him."

SERMON IV.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 1—5.

"*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*"

OUR meditation on this memorable passage of Scripture now draws to a close, and connecting the train of thought in which we indulged on the last occasion with the line of remark which we purpose to pursue to-day, we may observe, first, that the intensity of desire, which the Apostle ascribes to the faithful in the verses of our text, evidently involves no discontent on their part with their present condition, no impatient

desire to quit their "earthly house of this tabernacle," no eager grasping for the crown, before they have fully endured the burden of the cross. The best men have been found even to desire life, provided the continuance of it could conduce to the glory of God, and the good of their fellow-creatures. We have already shewn how this feeling manifested itself in St. Paul; and even the holy Jesus, before he gave expression to the feeling of entire resignation to the will of God, uttered one word of natural impulse, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me." Grace was never meant to cross the innocent inclinations of nature, nor to make death appear desirable simply in itself, as death, and yet this natural desire "to abide still in the flesh" implies no contradiction to that "groaning," which the burdened saints are described by the Apostle in the text as uttering, or as feeling unutterably; heaven and its happiness may be objects of desire running quite parallel with a wish to dwell somewhat longer in the "earthly house of this tabernacle." Indeed, here is the difference between a sanctified and an unsanctified desire to be released from the burden of the flesh, the one is a wish simply to be removed from present evil, the other, to be removed to future good. It is quite possible to suppose that death, though not a thing desirable in itself, may be so connected with something else as to make it most desirable, and this connection is, that to them who depart in the faith and fear of God, "mortality is swallowed up of life." We have many instances of the unsanctified desire, of which we have spoken, recorded in Scripture,

such as that murmuring word of the Israelites, "Would to God that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt." It is a usual expression amongst ourselves, "I wish I were in my grave," but, alas! this is speaking most unadvisedly with the lips, and they who so speak little know what it is to be numbered with the dead, and to be called to their last account. We have a striking example of this sinful discontent in the book of Job—"Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul? which long for death but it cometh not, and dig for it more than for hid treasures, which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?" At this dark period of his history, darker from the light which had just before shone on it, Job states the case of others, while he is really representing his own, and tacitly reflects on divine providence as unjust and unkind in affording a continuance of life, after the comforts of life are gone; he speaks of them as longing for death after they have outlived the pleasures and gratifications of life, burdened perhaps with age, sickness, and infirmity, it may be with pain, poverty, and disgrace; but all this argues a sinful consideration for present enjoyment, and a sinful want of consideration in respect to a future state. But even from such a condition of mind and feeling as this, a lesson of great spiritual value may be learnt; if the sorrows of our earthly being can, contrary to the desire and dictates of nature, so far prevail as to induce men to consider death desirable for its own sake, how much

more in a spiritualised point of view should they consider it desirable, in reference to the joys to which it leads; the grave and gate of death being to the faithful and the good, as our Church declares, the passage to a joyful resurrection. Let it then, Brethren, be your earnest endeavor, through the aid of God's holy spirit which alone can give to human effort a sanctifying or a saving efficacy, to prepare yourselves for a transition from a world of sense to a world of spirits, leaving it to the great disposer of events to order the time and circumstances of your removal thither as He thinks fit. Grace teaches us in the midst of life's sweetest comforts to be willing to die, and in the midst of life's severest crosses to be willing to live.

Such discontent then as expressed by God's people of old, whilst punished for their ingratitude in the wilderness, and such impatience as was manifested by the Chaldean patriarch, in that momentary dark and dismal era of his life, were not the feelings of God's saints of old, as they are not of his faithful ones now. Beyond question, they have as strong a sense of the evil of sin, and of the sorrows which follow in its train, as other men, but they do not impatiently desire to be freed from such disquietude of spirit. No doubt, when "occupying their business in the great waters" of this tempestuous state of things, and when "the stormy wind ariseth which lifteth up the waves thereof," they must be "glad to be at rest, and be brought to the haven where they would be." "This," as Bishop Horne observes, "is the consummation devoutly wished, and requested by

the Church for all her children at the time of their baptism, that they being delivered from God's wrath may be received into the ark of Christ's church, and being stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally they may come to the land of everlasting life."

But not only is there an absence of evil in this "groaning" of the spirit, but there is positive piety of feeling combined with it. We have seen that it proceeds from an assurance of the truth of God's promises, and from the certain knowledge, that when our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. This conviction evidently implies that a serious preparation for another state of being has been going on in the believer's soul. "If so be," says the text, "that being clothed we shall not be found naked." Here is clearly an apprehension felt, lest the soul being weighed in the balance might be found wanting. The believer who so feels, and expresses the feeling, may indeed hope that God's grace will yet be sufficient for him, that such strength will be imparted to his weakness as will enable him to go on his spiritual way rejoicing, and in the great Christian conflict to come off more than conqueror; and such a feeling will shew that he is standing with his lamp burning, and ready to meet the great Bridegroom of the Church; with aged Simeon he is enabled to say,

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mineeyes have seen thy salvation."

In the expression, "mortality shall be swallowed up of life," there is not only great force, but a striking peculiarity of meaning. This meaning is well explained by an early ecclesiastical writer; "It is not a swallowing up, as fire or water would swallow up what is cast into it, but as darkness is swallowed up by light, as imperfection by perfection, as a rude draught by the completion of the picture, as childhood by manhood." It is then, that "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," it is then that "shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory," then it is that the believer will sing his song of triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Of them it may be said, as the Redeemer said of himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen!"

This life then, which is declared with such emphasis of speech to swallow up mortality, is an eternal life, and he who is raised up to it will live, never to die again. No perplexity, no fear, about any farther change. It has been beautifully said, that "in the earthly paradise there was a way out, but none in again, but in the heavenly paradise there will be a way in, but none out again." They who would pass thence cannot, the gulph between them and aught belonging to earth is for ever fixed. The sight there is glorious, for they who are

admitted there shall see God face to face; the hearing there is glorious, for St. Paul says, when he was in spirit carried up thither, he heard words which were "unspeakable" elsewhere, such was their sublimity, that no tongue of men could utter them; the place and company are glorious, for the one is "Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem;" the other is, "an innumerable company of Angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born, God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect." Mark, Brethren, this glowing description of the Church triumphant in heaven is meant by the Apostle, and indeed explicitly stated by him, as an emblem and a representation of the Church militant here on earth. Faithful and obedient Christians are indeed a glorious company, a blessed society. Amongst them is God seen ruling, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, saving them. To him all come by faith, believing that He is, and that He is a rewarder of all who diligently seek Him; by the same like precious faith, and influenced by the same lively hope, they hold sacred communion with each other; under the direction of the same holy Spirit they walk together in the same path of holiness, grapple with the same spiritual adversaries, and hasten on to the same rest which remaineth for the people of God.

The great truth then is again presented to our view, the truth on which we remarked at the commencement of this short series of discourses, namely, that the being thus "not unclothed, but clothed upon," and "mor-

tality being swallowed up of life," death is not a destruction or annihilation, but only a dissolution of the component parts of man, the soul being separated from the body but for a time. What a blessed thought, that at the very time the soul is in joy and felicity, in that mysterious intermediate state between death and judgment, the flesh is also resting in hope; that the very dust into which the body resolves itself is guarded by Almighty power, that its thin particles may be hereafter collected together and formed into a reanimated body—a body even like unto Christ's glorious body. What a blessed thing, again, that the departing Christian can see life in death, and that when his sorrowing friends gathered round his dying bed, behold him bidding farewell to time, he, at the same moment, is welcoming eternity.

While then, beloved, you meditate on these solemn and awakening assurances, while you apply this healing balm to your wounded spirit, never lose sight of the only source of all this blessedness, that He who "hath wrought you for this selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto you the earnest of the Spirit." Nature would never excite within you so holy an affection as to "desire to be clothed upon with your house which is from heaven." Grace must create such a feeling within you, and equally must it work with you in doing, as in willing, whilst engaged in working out your salvation with fear and trembling.

The original word, translated in the text, "wrought," is a very forcible one, denoting a process powerful and

most accurate; as powerful and as accurate as the working of the stone, which is wrought for the corner stone of some magnificent material structure. Yes! they who are to be the polished corners of God's spiritual temple in heaven, must be squared and fashioned by God's grace on earth, and what a cheering assurance is farther afforded us in the text, that an earnest of this blessedness is given us here below by the effusion of the spirit on our hearts; an earnest being in spiritual things, as well as in temporal things, not only a part of payment, but also a pledge of full payment. The comforts of the Spirit are but the prelude to the fullness of joy, which is in the presence of God, and to the pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore! But remember, too, what is farther meant by an "earnest;" it implies that he, to whom it is given, is bound to the performance of some willing faithful service; if that service be not performed willingly and faithfully, the earnest itself having been once given may not be perhaps withdrawn, but all further payment or reward is at an end. He then who has thus given you the earnest of his grace will also give you the full sum of his glory, provided the stipulated conditions, which accompanied the pledge, are performed. Two parties, indeed, there are to the Covenant, but any thing like departure from the terms of the contract by One of them is impossible. God cannot lie, He will perform all that He has promised; whatever little He gives at first is the sure token of more, good measure shaken together, pressed down, running over, does He finally give.

In but one other serious reflection will time permit us to indulge, and that is, how great must be the excellency of the work, which God himself is declared as having "wrought." Surely the preparatory process now, so great and powerful, must be succeeded by something of corresponding value. As the instruments with which God works are the most costly and valuable, so must the work, when done, be indeed proportionably rich and precious. If, then, the peace of mind which you now enjoy, by keeping, as far as possible, a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man, be so soothing to the feelings now; if "he is kept in perfect peace whose soul is stayed in God," whilst that soul is confined within its prison-house of clay, what must be its joy when it has winged its flight to heaven and to happiness! Surely, after it has slept its sleep of death, and has awakened up after God's likeness, it must satisfied with it; if the first fruits of Almighty goodness be so plentiful, what must be the full harvest? if the cluster of Eschol's grapes be so beautiful to the eye and delicious to the taste, what must be the full vintage, when the land of promise and rest is reached? As an "earnest" implies a contract entered into, so also does it imply some delay taking place before the terms of that contract are fully completed; thus, as soon as the believer enters into covenant with God at baptism, his heavenly inheritance, so to speak, is graciously and mercifully recognised, but his possession of that happy abode is not made over to him at once; the blessedness of it is deferred, partly that the conditions

of faith and love may be fulfilled by him, partly that by human means God may be honored on earth, that the light of his redeemed servants may so shine before men that they may see their good works, and may glorify their Father which is in Heaven. Remember, then, that every gift of the Holy Spirit, all his influences as sanctifier and comforter, are the foretaste of the joys of heaven itself; the Spirit's illumination is a pledge of everlasting light, the Spirit's sanctification is a pledge of perfect holiness, the Spirit's consolation is a pledge of the comfort wherewith the believer will be comforted for ever of God. In a word, grace is the beginning of glory.

Never doubt then, Brethren, that if you are faithful unto death, the full sum of blessedness, of which you have "the earnest" in part payment, will be yours; and till it does become yours, my prayer is, that by the secret drawings of the Spirit, you may day by day choose God more and more as the portion of your inheritance, and your lot, that you may be pardoned in your failings, held up in your backslidings, supported in your troubles, delivered out of your temptations. You may have your doubts and fears, your anxious spirits may at times be perplexed in respect to the issue of the conflict, but you may be assured—for God himself hath spoken it—you may be "confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

RYDE:
PRINTED BY G. BUTLER.

CONSTANCY AND CONTENT IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

A SERMON,

FOR

THE PARISHIONERS OF CIRENCESTER,

PREACHED IN THEIR PARISH CHURCH,

ON OCTOBER 19TH, 1845,

THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY,

AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST.

W. F. POWELL, M.A.

PERPETUAL CURATE.

LONDON:

J. G. & F. RIVINGTON.

BAILY AND JONES, CIRENCESTER.

MDCCCXLV.

SERMON.

PSALM LXXIII, VER. 27.

"BUT IT IS GOOD FOR ME TO HOLD ME FAST BY GOD, TO PUT MY TRUST IN THE LORD GOD: AND TO SPEAK OF ALL THY WORKS IN THE GATES OF THE DAUGHTER OF SION."

TWO obvious points occur to us on hearing these words: the blessedness of constancy in the things of God; and the particular blessedness of exercising that constancy within the sphere that God has fixed for us. St. Asaph "holds fast," "draws near," "puts his trust" in God, which he says is "good." He makes the manifestation of this constancy within the sphere that God has fixed for him; he abides at his allotted post "in the gates of the Daughter of Sion."

There are no particular words or expressions that one is aware of requiring to be explained. They are not words we have to deal with, so much as with the duties expressed in those words.

The Daughter of Sion we take for God's church, as Asaph knew it; God appointed a place, as well as a service and a people, for the honour of His name; and as all this together is sometimes

called a bride, and a spouse, so it is here called a daughter; a daughter of a place, the daughter of Sion. "Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead" This church is so personified in the 45th Psalm, where you see her brought into the king's palace all glorious within. The gates of the daughter denote and circumscribe the sphere within which Asaph's allotted work was to be dutifully, contentedly, and constantly carried on.

CONSTANCY in what he has to do, and CONTENT within the bounds which God assigns to him for doing it, he has learnt to look upon as constituting his blessedness; "It is good for me" to do and to feel so.

He might have wished (if it were lawful for one trusting in God to encourage himself in his own wishes) for more; that he might move rather than hold fast; that he might be more at large sometimes, instead of standing in the same gates; and get on in another range in preference to being fixed within a given limit; but he suspected the heart, he did not suffer his own wish to prevail. He took the appointment as God had settled it for him. It was of God, it was with God, what he had to do, and what he had to help him to do it; he felt assured of God's ordinance, and that was good for him, good enough, better than he deserved, better than he could improve, and so he expressed

it for doctrine and for resolution, "It is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God, and to speak of all His works in the gates of the daughter of Sion." Let us pray God to teach us all, and to give us all Constancy in what we have to do, and also Content in doing it where He places us, and as He vouchsafes to employ us.

In all the ages under the Old Testament, the good persons we read of had a faith and earnestness of soul, which, we have sufficient authority for saying, carried their minds and expectations, and, in a certain degree, their desires, on beyond what it was their present gift to touch or possess. "They looked for a city," "they desired a better country, that is an heavenly." They had "not received the promises;" only "having seen them afar off," and being equally "persuaded of them. (Heb. xi.) They held fast, however, as they were, to what they knew God had given them to do; that was their sphere of grace, their waiting place, and they feared to exceed, however clearly they knew that something more, or something else, was to come; because with vast prospects opening, and earnest expectations, they had grace given them to know when to close the "longing eye," and where to stop. We read how they "desired to see the things which we see;" these things might have been nearer than they were, for what they

knew; but even if it were so, they held fast as they were, where God had placed them, not eager to lead and anticipate, so much as to wait, and prepare in their generation, as He should be pleased to speak. "I look for the Lord; my soul doth wait for Him; in His word is my trust." (Psal. cxxx. 5.) Joseph "made mention of the departing of the children of Israel;" Moses "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;" (Heb. xi.) other things, other conditions, were almost within their reach, and command; the "treasures of Egypt," and so forth, but they held fast where God had permitted them to be as their proper station. Even St. Paul, in the stages of his personal advance and perseverance, going on as he did to perfection, did it in steadfastness and constancy: not unsettled because he was not yet made perfect, not seeking out another course where his allotted one to human hope might appear to fall short, but he pressed forward as he was, he went on doing what he had to do; confessing that the perfection he sought was not now, but henceforth; that his crown was not completed here, but laid up for him in glory to come; he went on pressing towards his mark, on the condition of abiding patiently in his prescribed course. (Phil. iii.) To "hold fast" by God; to "draw near," are the two expressions of this duty in the common Prayer Book; and the Bible versions, i.e. "fixedness" and "nighness,"

what our Saviour calls straitness and narrowness; the "strait gate," the "narrow way," opposed to what is unsettled or rambling; keeping our position "in the gates of the daughter of Sion." It is shewed, also, how this Constancy was kept in its due course by Confidence—confidence not in his own views, but God. Asaph joins with "holding fast by God," putting his "trust in the Lord God;" which indicates our only true and sure ground: namely, a turning away from the satisfaction of what we desire and wish, to a following what He appoints and thinks enough for us. "THOU shalt guide me with THY counsel, and AFTER THAT receive me in glory."

A trust in the Lord is the necessary and only real safeguard against the Devil, who beguiles us through his subtilty, and the self-satisfying vanity of our own hearts and minds, that "corrupt us from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 3.) —one keeps us fast, the other is sure to unsettle. It is often a duty to be jealous of our own inclinations. There may be many motives in the infirmity and ignorance of our minds and thoughts besides "trust in the Lord God," which lead us to wish for more than we attain to; and one of the most dangerous of these, requiring daily self examination, is the conception that our desire for more is a sign that more is actually proper for us. Let us ask, first, do we use what we have; are

we doing what we might where we are placed, in pure dependence upon the Lord God? Do we fully understand the mercy and blessedness of being in the "gates of the daughter of Sion" at all? Do we allow our own unworthiness of such a post, even on the threshold, or as a door-keeper there? Are we aware of the extent of our own falling short of all the duties and offered benefits that God's grace already lays before us, and that are so infinitely neglected by us? How, in this view of the case, can we venture to think that something else would be doing us more good, or would be safe for us, if we are wishing it of our own desire, or seeking it beyond our allotted but unimproved sphere? I, who deserve not the very least of what I have, am only shaping out a peril for myself in thinking I am fit for more, especially if I know myself to come so short of what I have. Trust in the Lord God convinces me of this; and it is time for me to suspect a satisfying of the flesh, if I am not holding fast to what I have within the sphere He has fixed for me, and where I know He is. Over and over again, then, if you will study the book of Psalms, you will discover the doctrine of Constancy in the things of God; of trust in Him, in what He sets us to do, without seeking to satisfy our own desires; without trying to lead events and order circumstances according to our own inclinations. "Lead me, O Lord, in

Thy righteousness, because of mine enemies: make Thy way plain before me." (Psal. v.) And the opposite spirit of impatience, of an unsettled, or a rambling disposition, is as exactly deprecated.

"Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord. There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us." (Ps. iv. 5. 6. 7.)

And all this you may rest assured of in St. Paul's admonition, who regulates Christian desire by the wholesome restraints of God's appointment, "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded, and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. iii. 15. 16.)

A principal duty then, for each member of our branch of the universal church, in examining his or her religious state, is to begin with this: that God is my trust—that I am clear of the snare of seeking to form and indulge my own desires, much more of making them the measure of what is good for me. Once believing (as in the blessedness of His Church it would be sin in me to disbelieve) that I occupy my place, and have my service to do by His gift and calling, I know I am within His grace, under His eye, established by His counsel;

that He is sure to be here, and that I have Him with me; that it is for Him to fix the measure of grace He will give me, and mine to stay and act up to that, because His appointments are "good for me"—that I am not to choose or try to fix the measure of grace for myself, or to take up my own position, when He has already given me one, which must be sufficient as being His, and as having Him to ordain and fill it—that a doubt of the sufficiency of all this is a ceasing to put my trust in the Lord God; it is a beginning to invent my own counsel. To unsettle myself in God's way, is to unsettle myself in God; it is not blessedness, because it is impatience as to what God will have me to do; whereas, says the Psalmist, "It is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God, and to speak of all Thy works in the gates of the daughter of Sion."

II. But to be constant, the Psalm teaches we must be CONTENT. Let it not be thought whether some other post might be easier, happier, more engaging, fuller of what we think would suit us, better for us to aim at. If it were all this, depend upon it, God would have placed us there; that it is not so is certain, in God having placed us where we are. He has different work for different servants, and their own sphere for every one. The very disposition to change places

should be resisted, and will be, if we trust in the Lord God.

The first temptation that holy scripture acquaints us with, was the temptation of Eve, to be dissatisfied with what God had appointed for her, to think that something more would be better, and wiser, and happier; sure to bring higher grace and more brilliant results, and make her more as God than God had chosen for her to be. A given sphere was allotted in the Garden of Eden, but that sphere was not believed in; its happiness, though God allowed and circumscribed it, was not enough, as long as the desire of the eyes, and the voice of the Tempter had some other idea of a further advance of happiness to propose. She began to shape out another walk in the garden. Her idea was to be as God; but the influence that suggested the idea was not of God. When she thought she was grasping the last thing she would ever want to make the blessedness of Paradise complete, the woman was being beguiled by the serpent, and discontent working itself out into an act, brought death to herself, and you, and me, and all. The Paradise of the soul has its forbidden tree too, its walks parcelled out, its fixed sphere, its "gates of the daughter of Sion;" and where God has designed our station and settled our range, there we are to abide in what we have, and beware of desiring what is pleasant to the eyes. One

step too far into the mazes of our own venturesomeness; one touch too many of its fruits after our own liking; one desire for more than He has allotted, is the signal at which the gates that shut us in for our own security are burst open, and we discover not perfection, but a fall.

I will just direct you seriously to study the consequences of the least departure from your fixed sphere, even on the plea of seeking to know more of God, and the tendencies that lead to them, in the account of the fall of our first parents, (Gen. iii.) and I want you to read all under this conviction about Constancy and Content, that it is good to "hold me fast by God;" but better even than that—at any rate necessary in order to that, to speak of all His "works" in the "gates of the daughter of Sion."

Thus thought St. Asaph in his experience; he saw many others prospering, and perhaps they told him to come and try the happiness of their kind of prosperity, instead of abiding in his own calling. He was very near doing what they wished — forgetting his post; their solicitations and seeming success were getting too much for him; he says, "My feet were almost gone, my treadings had well nigh slipped." (Ps. lxxiii. 2.) This brings to our mind St. Peter sinking while he was walking on the water to go to Christ. But why this tottering and wavering? because

Asaph was going away from his post in the temple; because Peter was venturing away from his proper element. They wanted grace to abide in the portion God had fixed for them. They were both searching for something nearer an imagined consummation of happiness; precisely as Eve, when she was seeking perfection beyond her settled sphere, and tasted the fruit she had desired to make her as God, to open her eyes, which, in fact, was poison to her soul, and death to all mankind. Asaph was confounded: St. Peter began to sink: Eve fell.

Asaph and Peter were obliged to own their folly and get back to their post again as quick as they could, from their self-satisfying adventures, for St. Asaph says "I went into the sanctuary of God," obliged to rebuke himself for having thought to be able to understand so much that was too hard for him. St. Peter is lifted up of Christ, yet at the same time receives the reproof of his weakness, "wherefore didst thou doubt?" and Eve, too, as a gracious invitation to all returning wanderers, was called back from her fatal course with the man once more to establish himself within the given gates, to put forth his hand, "and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever."

All were obliged to retrace their steps; were forced to own that all is vanity and vexation, and

to dread the slippery places they had ventured upon, and the peril of forming their own aims and wishes, and to preach to all generations the duty of contented fixedness in our sphere, whatever perfection may seem to exist, but be denied us beyond it: in a word, and for ever, "to speak of all God's works in the gates of the daughter of Sion."

A question may here arise, "Can there be a perfection which God withholds?" In all reverence and submission, I say there can; he is the Devil who first teaches that there cannot, when he suggests this thought, "yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden."

Another question may follow: "If we see a perfection, are we not to go after it?" In the same spirit as before, I answer, No. Not if it carry us beyond the sphere that God has fixed for us and assured us of, for God himself hath said, "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou mayest not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. ii. 16. 17.) It may be a perfection, or we may think it such. But whatever perfection is needful, or good for me as one of His chosen, I am to wait for, and try for within the range He has appointed for me.

Let me realize it to myself that I am not one who deserves even what he has, much less ought

to be forward to claim more; that my true position is that of a penitent, longing and waiting and requiring to stand at the porch with cries of humiliation, much more than of one fitted for the Holy of Holies. Therefore the language of the penitential Psalm (Ps. cxxx.) best becomes us to be used where we are. "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth *wait,* and in His word do I hope. My soul *waiteth* for the Lord more than they that watch for the Lord: I say more than they that watch for the morning. Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

It was the sin of Israel to murmur against what they already had, and to be always longing after something more of the perfection of God's gifts. But an impatient spirit was not in a fit state to receive a blessing. They got the gift but without the perfection. To eat food, even Angels' food from God, could do them no good unless it were the very food which God had fixed for them; and very awful is the warning to all such as will go self-seeking beyond God's appointments: "Lust came upon them in the wilderness: and they tempted God in the desert. And He gave them their desire, and sent leanness withal into their soul." (Ps. cvi. 14. 15.)

Moreover your attention ought to be directed

to the 78th Psalm if you think that God never puts a limit to the gifts of perfection, or that it is not blessed to seek them out of our own sphere.

"They spake against God also, saying, Shall God prepare a table in the wilderness? He smote the stony rock indeed, that the water gushed out, and the streams flowed withal; but can He give bread also, or provide flesh for His people? When the Lord heard this, He was wroth; so the fire was kindled in Jacob, and there came up heavy displeasure against Israel; because they believed not in God, and put not their trust in His help."

And all that Psalm shows the effects of the desire of more than God gives, which step by step grows and feeds itself, and brings its own fall at last in the midst of attainments which we may force Him to grant, but without a blessing.

These very people who got their perfections, got them not without their punishment. They had more than God could sanctify, or themselves bear, and the load of too many gifts, and too much happiness as they thought it, broke their backs at last. "They tempted and displeased the Most High God, and kept not His testimonies; but turned their backs and fell away like their forefathers, starting aside like a broken bow. For they grieved Him with their hill-altars, and provoked Him to displeasure with their images.

When God heard this He was wroth, and took sore displeasure at Israel. So that He forsook the Tabernacle in Silo. Even the tent that He had pitched among men. He delivered their power into captivity: and their beauty into the enemy's hand."

That which applies to the Tabernacle in Silo, Asaph applies to the Temple in Sion, and we apply to our own portion in the Church of Christ. That God will forsake it, or those of it, unless they are content to think it good for them—to abide in their gift, and treat it as their Divinely settled sphere, their "gate of heaven." That is the channel of his grace to them. He has called them there, placed them there, and that is their post at which He is watching and supplying them. All this simply because it is His appointment for them. The one He is pledged to bless to them. It is as the Waters of Jordan; they must wash *there*, and be clean.

Some other portion of the stream may be more rapid, appear more silvery, sound more soothing, but where God has fixed for them to follow His ark across, that is the spot alone dry for their feet, and there they must be walking.

And a true trust in God will seek no answers; faith will encourage no thoughts about this, but simply such as these: "It is the Lord's doing." "It is good for us to be here." "It is good for

me to hold me fast by God; to put my trust in the Lord God, and to speak of all Thy works in the gates of the daughter of Sion.

These considerations I apply to you, my brethren, as members of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. You have your station in that branch of it, which the Lord has chosen for you, and not man. I apply them also to myself, whom He has graciously permitted to minister in holy things within this portion of His vineyard. To us, this is our Sanctuary, the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. (Heb. viii. 2.)

St. Asaph's Psalm was for general benefit, and yet it spake a great deal about himself. We may sometimes teach and succour you by speaking about ourselves. God may sometimes be bringing things about to oblige us to do so. He brought things about of the kind in Asaph's days, and though the occcasion was one of vast sorrow to him, it was a good to the people then, and now, and ever; for the momentary trial and the work of the enemy passed away, and was put a stop to, but this Psalm survives the agitation because the promise is "The word of the Lord endureth for ever."

Go then to that Word which you have; make it your study and law. If what has been said finds not a kindred feeling in your heart, begin to question whether you have made it your study and

law so much as you ought. Go to it again, make it supreme. Then if you say you do so, and have done so, and want more yet, I give you that something more, but I give it by also taking away. Set yourself wholly and undividedly to it, and consider that you have been giving yourself too much to other things, or thoughts and books beyond it. Turn yourself now into it; pray to God over it; wait for God in it; and if your state require such a discipline, read it in humiliation on your knees. This shall be the "gates of the daughter of Sion" to you; gates well to be loved above all by you, loved of the Lord "more than all the dwellings of Jacob;" (Ps. lxxxvii. 2.) Thoroughly to be repaired and watched, when so much is flying about them to take off your attention another way; when the strong man armed is at hand to carry them away, and us with them if he can. But while we agreed together to take away something, we agreed that something should be given. It is the Church's voice in your Prayer Book. There remember, you have what is safe for you to want; for what in a wholesome state of religion is your need, but a Bible to know who God is and what He requires, and the interpretation and guidance and manual of your Church as the witness and keeper of Holy Writ, (Article xx.) to teach you how to worship Him and do His will?

You have there what the body of Christ's

Church has ever received and taught for Catholic truth; and you are persuaded the rather of this gift of God in Jesus Christ, because it is a deposit preserved for you "in the gates of the daughter of Sion."

Some may wish more; some be satisfied with less. You have enough, and for the simple reason that it is what God sees fit to vouchsafe for your sphere. You may have more and too much, or less and too little. Some may exceed by additions and superstitions; some diminish by denials and heresies. "You have the faith once delivered to the saints;" contend for it earnestly, and use it faithfully.

You have the three Creeds, (Art. viii.) and what can you give in exchange for them, or what would you hazard in seeking more than them?

You have the pure worship and praise of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the one God and Father of us all; the one Mediator and Intercessor, the one Sanctifier; the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity. This in the instruction of your Catechism, and in the solemnities of Litanies and Doxologies.

Dare you acknowledge or invoke more?

You have the whole Book of Psalms, which if you desire an encreasing exercise of prayer, you may use like one who wrote in the Psalter; "In the evening and morning and at noonday will I pray, and that instantly." (Psalm lv. 18.)

And if that do not satisfy you, adopt the practice of the primitive Christians, who were occupied in the Psalter, at their meals and at their labours, [*Bingham's Antiquities*, b. xiv. c. 1. sec. 1.] and sanctified both rest and works with the songs of Sion. Or if more seem needful to the hungry soul, aim at the living of that religious deacon of our church, NICHOLAS FARRER, who besides his other course of devotions within the provisions of the Prayer Book, with one or other of his household, in watchings and prayer, went through the whole Book of Psalms, once in every four-and-twenty hours, and this, as the single-hearted biographer relates, "this done as constantly as the sun runs his circle every day about the world, and then begins again the same instant as it ended." (*Isaac Walton's Life of G. Herbert.*)

You have a Bible and Prayer Book, and these daily open in the service of your Parish Church; the Creeds for the confirmation of faith, and the Psalter for the exercise of devotion; you have also the two Sacraments which Christ hath ordained in his Church "as generally necessary to salvation." (Catechism.) Would that all used them more reverently, and had recourse to the second more frequently and habitually. Had you more faith, were you more consistent in this way of holding fast by God, He would not have left us to ourselves, as our negligence may well be tempt-

ing Him to do. But say not you have not grace enough in your Church, until you have settled with yourself how it is that you do not complain against us for so seldom administering in Sacrament to your wants.

Are you fit for more frequent celebration? then I say unfit as we may be ourselves for such close and often approaches, Let it be demanded at our hands. It is the childrens' bread, and we dare not withhold it. If there be one earnest, feeble, wavering, wanting soul in this flock, which, from any unfaithfulness of ours, or any hard necessity laid upon us to be infrequent in communion, feels that it is not fed enough; cry out we beseech you for more sustenance of grace. In that case, through good report and evil report, on every Sunday and other Holyday, as your Church provides; after every confirmation, every marriage, every churching, to the sick, to the dying, from house to house [see Rubrics to each Office in the Prayer Book], and here at the Lord's table, you shall find us ready, rather than that one of these little ones perish, to administer to your wants in this "strengthening and refreshing your souls by the body and blood of Christ." (Catechism.)

But let none go hence and say, you want more grace than your Church has means to give; or that it is to your Church's charge that you cannot find bread here in the wilderness. It shall

not be for lack of service, will you but help us and allow us, and require us, that any of you shall say you cannot praise God enough "in the gates of the daughter of Sion."

But as these remarks are applied to you, so let them not conclude without their application to one whom they concern as much as yourselves. They have their bearing upon me. I must be, like Asaph, one that teaches, and helps and comforts you by including himself. The sheep not only hear the voice, but observe the track of the shepherd; and that track he must make as definite and plain as he can; at sometimes more than at others. When the storm beats in upon both, the flock needs a louder voice, and a firmer tread on his part. I gather you then into your fold, and in the dismay of perilous times, I stand upon my watch-tower, to look out for your succour, and the shepherd calls to you that you may know his voice. So then let me lead you to your own gates, and there shut you in and guard you, and relieve your consternation by what you shall see of the parson in firmness. This is the portion of His flock, and this is the door of His fold, which God has called me up from the depths of unworthiness to watch over. He hath assigned to me this sphere, and in it by His grace and strength I must do all and stand. Thankful for the honor and blessedness of having received so much;—

humbled in the manifold infirmities and faults of my service, and righteously deserving, even needing whatever correction His chastening hand may kindly lay upon me. But "though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (Job xiii. 15.) Here in the unity of the whole church as God purchased it with his own blood;—as Christ the Head edifies and fills it;—as the Holy Ghost governs and sanctifies it;—founded on the Apostles and Prophets, fenced in by creeds, fed by sacraments, ordered and taught by bishops and pastors;—here I pray for the sufficiency of all grace, that I may stand without falling, till He calls me away from the miseries of a distracted church, and wicked world.

This is the Church of my baptism;—the mother of all my hopes and blessings;—whom I love, and bless, and serve for Jesus' sake: and at her side, under her wings, bound to the horns of her altar, it is alone "good for me to hold me fast by God."

Whatever you have heard to afflict us all,—whatever remains for you to hear, as a nearer and deeper cause of solemn sorrow and dismay, this is the confidence your own minister desires to establish between you and himself, in the parting words of Bishop KENN:—

"As for my religion, I die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole

Church before the disunion of East and West; more particularly in the Communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all papal and puritan innovation, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross." (*Preamble of Bishop Kenn's Will.*)

A PRAYER FOR UNITY.

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly Union and Concord: that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The seven Penitential Psalms: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143.

Also Psalms 80, 122, 133.

Also Daniel, chapter ix.

Also the Commination Service.

Are recommended for private use at this time.

CIRENCESTER:
PRINTED BY BAILY & JONES,
MARKET-PLACE.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

A SERMON,

BY THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M.A.

CHELTENHAM:

WIGHT AND BAILEY, THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY.
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO., LONDON.

MDCCCXLV.

MACINTOSH, PRINTER,

GREAT NEW-STREET, LONDON.

A SERMON.

Exodus xxxi. 12, 13, 14.

"AND THE LORD SPAKE UNTO MOSES, SAYING, SPEAK THOU ALSO UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, SAYING, VERILY MY SABBATHS YE SHALL KEEP: FOR IT IS A SIGN BETWEEN ME AND YOU THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS; THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD THAT DOTH SANCTIFY YOU.

"YE SHALL KEEP THE SABBATH THEREFORE; FOR IT IS HOLY UNTO YOU: EVERY ONE THAT DEFILETH IT SHALL SURELY BE PUT TO DEATH: FOR WHOSOEVER DOETH ANY WORK THEREIN, THAT SOUL SHALL BE CUT OFF FROM AMONG HIS PEOPLE."

Ever since the fall, Christ was the way to the Father, and he was set forth even in the Old Testament with equal clearness, as in the New. Our Church says, Article 7, "The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testaments everlasting life is offered to mankind through Christ, who is the only Mediator

between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises." And yet we hear of a strange notion prevailing in the Christian world, that believers under the Old Testament dispensation did not understand the person and work of Christ so well as we do. Whereas they had the same revelation and the same Spirit to explain and to apply it; they had the same faith that we have, in the same Lord; the same hope in Jesus, the same love to him, and the same obedience to his will, on the same motive; and there is no difference between us and them, but in this one single circumstance; they believed in Christ who was to come, as we believe in Christ who is come. Moses, and all the prophets, with one mouth, testified of Christ: they foretold his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. They gave their witness in plain words, and in significant rites, instituted of God, to describe what Christ was to be, and to do. The Levitical priesthood was appointed to explain those rites, and to make

them familiar by constant preaching. As many as were ordained unto eternal life heard and believed in the Lord Jesus. They were ready to give an answer to every one, who asked them, a reason of the hope that was in them. If any inquiring heathen had desired a believing Jew to open to him the meaning of the ceremonial law, he would have explained it, as St. Paul has, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, Christ being the substance of all the shadows. And if farther inquiry had been made, why is it you are so strict about the Sabbath-day? Upon what authority do you keep it? And what advantages do you expect from it? He would have given as direct and plain an answer as any man now living can. He would have said, that God created the world, and in six days formed it, and on the seventh he rested, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that on it he had rested from all his works, which God created and made; and that rest was to shew, that as God ceased from his works, so there was a time coming when we should cease from ours; so on this day we

cease from bodily labour, that we might have happy rest and converse with God by faith, as we hope to rest with him for evermore. If you ask, how does it appear that the believing Jews, in the Old Testament, should have as clear views of this matter, as we have in the New, I would refer you only to two or three Scriptures, and then open this matter, that we may see the obligation of keeping and sanctifying the Lord's-day.

The first is the original institution; many people think it is part of the ceremonial law: Adam had nothing to do with the ceremonial law, but he had to do with this rest, for if he had kept the Sabbath, and rested in God as his supreme good, he would have entered into that rest by his perfect obedience, which, blessed be God, we enter into by faith in Jesus. It was a moral obligation; so when the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made; rested, that is, he ceased

from creating and forming anything more, and he blessed the seventh day; he made it the means of blessing to us, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: he sanctified it for man's sake, that there might be a token that there was a real sanctification in Adam when he was first formed, and if he kept that image perfect, he should rest with the holy God for ever and ever; he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that he had rested from all his works which God created: that day is the institution of the first Sabbath, which did not last long, but the continuance of the Sabbath was after the fall; for before the giving of the law we find that Moses said, of the manna, it must not be gathered this day, because it is the holy rest of the Sabbath, which they had kept from the time of the fall, till the time of their coming out of Egypt. Upon the coming out of Egypt, the day was changed, they had kept the day which we now keep for Sunday from the beginning; but upon their coming out of Egypt, it was changed for the day in which they came out, and there is not any truth

can be made plainer from the Scriptures, than this truth, that the original Sabbath was changed at the children of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, and that it continued so. Our Lord lay in the grave, the Jewish, the original Sabbath, and he rose on the original creation Sabbath. The day that was kept from the beginning, has been the day of the Christian Sabbath. It has been asked, Where is there any sufficient proof and authority that this is a command of the most high God, and an obligation upon all his creatures? I chose to speak upon the passage before me, because of two or three words in it, which are not in the fourth commandment. This is an obligation, because the Lord spake to Moses, saying, "Speak thou also to the children of Israel, and say, Verily my Sabbath shall ye keep." Verily,—The Lord sets his asseveration before it; in one place it is "remember," and here it is "verily," this is the truth of God, that ye shall keep my Sabbath holy. Why? Because it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that sanc-

tifieth you. It is a sign; that is the word I would fix upon it. They did not keep the Sabbath for its own sake; it was but a sign, it was a memorial, they were to remember something by it, and so you know we don't keep the day now merely to cease from work, but we keep it for a particular purpose. It is a sign of the rest which believers have now in Jesus by faith; and it is a sign of that rest which remaineth to the people of God, when we believe. If you had asked any Jew or any Rabbi, What is your Sabbath a sign of? Why says he, it is a sign of God's resting chiefly: but now he has altered the day from our coming out of Egypt, it is a sign that we rested from the Egyptian bondage. It is a sign that God has brought us out, and taken us to be his peculiar people. He will, upon our setting apart this day to celebrate his service, to sing his praises, and join in hearing his word; he will sanctify us by his Spirit, through the means that he has appointed for the improvement of his day. Ye shall therefore keep the Sabbath, for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall

surely be put to death; and to gather sticks on the Sabbath-day, once was punished with death. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death. What is defiling the Sabbath? It is *not* entering into rest by believing, that is the greatest profanation of the Sabbath; then those who have not entered into the spiritual rest and found it in Jesus Christ; they exercise their trades, they can get on horseback and ride out of town; they can get out, if they cannot afford to ride on horseback or in a carriage; and those who spend their time in the city, you may find them in alehouses drinking till they are drunk, and then sallying out to do mischief. It is leaving the true rest that is in Jesus Christ:—it is no matter how men spend their time; if they have not entered into this rest, they are profaning the Sabbath if they are in a church; six days may work be done, but in the seventh, is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doth any work in the Sabbath-day, he shall surely be put to death; wherefore the children of Israel shall keep, shall observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual

covenant. Not only is the Sabbath a sign of our resting in God's love to us in Jesus Christ; but it is a perpetual covenant. The Sabbath cannot be repealed, and therefore the observance of it is a perpetual obligation, because it is part of a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever. When you and I enter into rest, and cease from our labours here, we shall have a long eternal Sabbath with God, in glory through Jesus Christ. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel, for ever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested; he rested and was refreshed. Now I would affix this meaning to the sign, that it is a memorial of God's resting from his works, and that when we are enabled to rest in Jesus Christ by faith, then we enter upon the spiritual Sabbath in time, and shall enter upon the Sabbath glory in eternity. How does it appear that this was the thing signified? There can be nothing to complete the subject, but this single inquiry; and therefore, that I may avoid all reasoning upon the subject, I will read to you the

most beautiful comment of an infallible expositor, the Apostle Paul, upon the fourth commandment, which is in the fourth of the Hebrews; I will just read over that part which belongs to my present subject, because it is impossible to say anything that will make it plainer than he does, namely, that the Sabbath signifies ceasing from outward labour, that we may rest by faith in the love of God in Jesus Christ, and all that have entered into this rest will want no arguments to stir them up to be frequent and constant in reading, hearing, praying, meditating, and everything that belongs to spiritual comfort on the Lord's-day. "Let us therefore fear," says the Apostle Paul, "lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it: for unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them." There you see they had the Gospel under the Old Testament dispensation as well as we, and I do not doubt but every believer understood it as well as any man upon earth, Unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit—Why?

because they did not mix faith with it. Now it is faith that lays hold of the word; faith fastens upon the truth of it; faith fixes so upon it, and so incorporates itself with it, as to make it a real substance; and rests upon God's faithfulness to make it good. Now that is the way that we should mix faith with the word. Well, but if they failed for want of faith, and did not enter into rest, how came you to enter? We who have believed do enter into rest—we who have believed. There is all that I have to say in that one sentence. There is a rest. How do we enter into it? By believing—by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, simply, without looking unto anything else. You never enter into rest without looking unto Jesus Christ as all in all; they that would have their own works to stand in some service as to their justification and their final acceptance; they that look to anything but Christ, they will be cast upon a turbulent sea all their days: but a person that is enabled to look to Jesus as the one rest of his soul, and looks at His works, and sees that He has finished the work of the

new creation, as perfectly as He has finished the works of the six days' creation, then that man enters into that Sabbath which will never end. Well, but say you, when did the believers in the Old Testament enter into this? We who have believed do enter into rest, as he said, but I have sworn in my wrath if they shall enter into my rest, that is proving one thing by another; they did not enter in because of unbelief; therefore, says the apostle, we enter in by faith, although the works were finished from before the foundation of the world: everything was finished and complete, and yet there is a rest that they did not attain then, for he speaketh in a certain place on this wise, God rested the seventh day from all his works; and he says if they shall enter into my rest. So they did not attain it by any outward act, but only by faith; seeing, therefore, it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief; that is the Jews, that perished in the wilderness. Then he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day (after so long a

time) to-day, if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts; but by believing enter into the Lord's rest. Now this proves that this spiritual rest, which the Scripture speaks of in the Psalms, that it was not entering into Canaan, it was not done by any outward thing for three thousand years; for it was that time from the creation to David; but it says in the eighth verse, if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day; but David, though a hundred years after entered into the promised land, speaks of a rest which the Jews had not then found. O how clear is the Scripture, when a man has got the plain meaning of it, and can take it in his hand and can say, this book, from the beginning to the end, is written of Christ, and all the shadows and figures in the Old Testament have Christ for their substance; when he can compare Scripture with Scripture he sees as plain as any truth can be made, that Jesus Christ is the one sun that shines upon and enlightens all the whole volume of Revelation. There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God, which

they had not in the promised land; which they had not even found in David's time. Well, where is this rest to be found? Why, here it is, "There is a Sabbath therefore," says he, Sabbatismos, "the keeping of the Sabbath remaining still for the people of God, for he that is entered into his rest he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." How plain and full is this against all Arminianism, against all mixing with works and grace. How plain is it, that when a man comes to Christ and enters into his spiritual rest, he has done with all his own working. He will work, but it will not be that he may be pardoned; not that he may be saved; not that he may be justified; not that he may be sanctified; not that he may obtain life; but he works to this purpose, in the way of duty; my faith is to be exercised, and then I am to rest in Jesus, and find sweet fellowship with the Father and the Son through it all the days of my life: and I must cease from my own work as God did from his. Well, says the apostle, now, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after

the same example of unbelief." It seems to be amazing, but if ever you was an awakened sinner, and seeking rest, you will find that it is the hardest thing in the world to believe in Christ; to find peace of conscience, without any remaining guilt; to find your heart happy, satisfied in Christ, and that with lips, and life, and time, and talents, you wish all your life to show forth all his praises. You will find it is great labour, and none can help you to do this work but the Almighty God. You will ask, perhaps, now, what is remaining of the sign that the Sabbath was? It is a sign of that spiritual rest into which believers enter, by receiving Christ through faith; and they enter into it in their consciences and in their hearts, and, as far as they believe, they are partakers now of that Sabbath which remaineth for the people of God. O that the Lord would help me to enter into this rest. If you will read the Bible upon the plan I have been recommending to you, take it and say, this book treats of Christ from the beginning to the end, and it points out a rest in him which we enter upon now in believing,

which is an earnest and foretaste of everlasting rest. How shall I enter into this? the apostle meets with that objection. There is no way but by the word, and there is no way but to look up to the Spirit to accompany the word; the Spirit and the word together are the body and the soul of this book; for the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. There is the conclusion of the whole matter: the word is what the Holy Spirit makes use of to bring us into rest, and when this rest is preached freely, and set before a poor sinner with all its rich fulness, then the Spirit comes and satisfieth him that he is as free to take this rest as any sinner that ever entered upon it; it is as full for you as ever it was for any one; enter upon it by faith. You only keep yourself from rest by unbelief; enter upon it by faith, and you will find peace in your conscience; believing in the bleeding Lamb you will find holiness and happiness in your

heart, looking to Jesus and believing in him you will go on your way rejoicing; looking unto Jesus who is bound to keep you, and you will rest satisfied in the love of God, that he loves you from everlasting to everlasting. This is the Sabbath. It is resting in Christ; and when you think of the profanation of it, how scandalously it has been abused in this Christian land, O how does this preach to you and me, that there are very few that enter into this spiritual rest. A man that has been brought into it by the word and by the Spirit of the living God, he cannot follow his trade on a Sunday if the laws would let him, he has better work to do, and his heart is deeply engaged in it; yea, he will take opportunities in week-days; he sees people can take time for their pleasures and diversion; his pleasure and diversion is to meet his God. O the Sabbath is his delight: there, says he, I meet my Jesus, and have fellowship with him; there I have found the Father's love and rested in it in my soul and heart; there the Holy Spirit has preached to my conscience and heart. There is a Sabbath, infinitely

beyond what you now have, remaining to the people of God. By and by you shall cease from your works, as God did from his, and then you shall rest with him. O this is Sabbath-day work; and therefore, as one of the fathers said of it, we abstain from bodily labour on that day, not that we may be spiritually idle, but that we may be spiritually busy. To those who do six days' hard work, really speaking, after the manner of men, it is a sort of a blessing to have a day of rest; but when we see how our business gets hold of our hearts, and how some people, not even on the Sabbath-day, can get rid of this; when we see how the things about us distract us, and hinder us from enjoying this rest, surely, sirs, you that have entered into it, you must look upon it as an infinite privilege, that God has commanded and enjoined you to meet him on this day, and has promised, that he that blessed it will bless it to you, he that sanctified it will sanctify it to you; and you can say with me, the best day of your lives has been the time when you have met God in his ordinances on his own day.

I now come to what I have to offer on the subject concerning the Christian Sabbath. It is the day that our blessed Saviour finished his work, and entered into his rest. They that believe in a risen Saviour, they will enter into his rest; and when they have entered into it, they will maintain it too, unless (which may be the case with some of the children of God) they may sit under legal preaching: we have all exceeding strong legal inclinations, and if a man sits under legal preaching, he will be kept in bondage, he seeks for rest in himself, instead of rest in Christ. Many of the children of God are kept down by their remaining corruptions, and cannot enter into this heavenly Sabbath, and others that want to get into it, will not go the Lord's way; they get in by a forbidden way, over the wall into the sheepfold, and want to come into this rest, by being perfect in the flesh; which being as contrary to all Revelation as light is to darkness, it is no wonder that that which is only another name for Antinomianism, (for perfection in the flesh is no other than Antinomianism,) it is no wonder they should

not enter into rest, when they get into a fool's paradise, and say they have no more sin in them than Christ; that they have nothing but the love of God burning in their hearts; and have had it so long, forty years. O what dreadful delusion is that. Men and brethren, have you ever entered into this Christian Sabbath; have you, by believing in Jesus Christ, found peace in your conscience; have you found your hearts happy; and as God rests in his love to his people, do you rest in God's love to you in Christ; and I am as certain as I am standing up in this place, that there is not a man or woman upon the face of this earth, that exercises their trade (supposing it to be a lawful trade at other times) on a Sunday. They cannot exercise their trade on a Sunday, if they are partakers of this spiritual rest; they find so much disturbance, so many things to be continually damping their enjoyments of this spiritual rest in Jesus, that it is the joy of their souls when the Lord's-day returns, that they have again an opportunity of kindling their hopes afresh, and drawing out the affections of their hearts, in holy love

to that Holy Jesus, who finished the work of the new creation, when he rose from the dead, and who finished the work of the first creation in the six days. If you have really entered into this rest, and are now happy partakers of it, you know what I am speaking, perhaps, better than I can tell you, and you know that you have an ugly thing to fight against, and there are enemies enough; you need not go to forbidden things, you need not go to profane the Sabbath; you know it is your duty, privilege, and happiness, to be found in those ways, where God will subdue your unbelief, and keep under your corruptions, and by that means help you to enter into and enjoy more of this spiritual Sabbath.

You remember, perhaps, that there is a Society met together here to-day, who have joined in agreeing to support the observance of the Lord's-day outwardly; it is God's Spirit only that can help us to keep it inwardly, and the Lord has been pleased to prosper them hitherto. I remember, about

twenty-five years ago, I began such a thing, and there was something done for a year or two, but then, people grew tired and fell off, and it came to nothing. If you really have entered into rest, and you would enjoy it; if you would enjoy the blessing which you now have, I would call upon you for gratitude to that God, who by believing has brought you into that Christian Sabbath of rest, to lend them some of your assistance; if you have time, lend them that; if it does not suit you to lend them your time, lend them something out of your pocket, for they are at great expense, they often have very expensive prosecutions; and the design of our collection to-day, is to help them in this; that if you cannot help them with your advice, cannot give up your time to them, every one who would wish to see the Lord's-day in this land restored to its primitive glory and primitive use, all that you and I have to do with our money, is to lay out a little for this purpose. I am certain this is God's cause, and as such, recommend it to God's people; the Lord enable you to

give what you can, and the Lord grant that it may be a tribute of a free-will offering.

When we look round and see the very great profanation of this day, and how it began to spread, as all infection does, one trade thought it lawful, and then another thought it lawful, and so from one business it got to others, it was a hard matter to know where to begin, but since I promised to recommend this charity to-day, many people have come to me, and said, I hope you will recommend such a thing; what signifies putting down bakers, butchers, &c., when the greatest wickedness is committed in ale houses. Then another says, Why don't you put down such and such things? This is but an infant Society, and I am certain of this, that much good has been done. I used to go commonly twice or thrice a-year through Fleet-market, and it was the same on Sunday as on Saturday; perhaps not a single shop shut in the market, and every thing exposed publicly to sale. I went through, yesterday se'nnight,

and there was not a single shop open, nor did I see a single person loitering about the market. Surely, this is the beginning of a reformation; and, certainly, there is a spirit of reformation gone abroad; and when we see the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the preached Gospel; when we see multitudes come to hear, and hear of the spread that is over the kingdom, of numbers of awakened ministers, who have great work in their several parishes, all over the land, I cannot help thinking, that God has not yet done with his people, but that he has still mercy in store for us, and all people that have received the blessing in their own heart, wish success to the ministry of others; and because magistrates and others regard only outward things, that we may be outwardly reformed, that then God will bless us as a nation, and that the judgments that are hanging over us may be averted; I think the stopping of the profanation of it, may have a great blessing backwards and forwards; backwards, for I suppose it stands in the decalogue, that its influence may go to the commandments before, and the com-

mandments after, to those before, namely, believing in God, trusting in him, and serving him according to his mind and will, and keeping holy his blessed day. Now the keeping the Sabbath is the outward means of sanctifying this day, coming to join the congregation; who knows but when God is passing by He may meet with you? He will not meet with you at the ale house. He will not meet with you riding out. He will not meet with you profaning the Lord's-day; but if you come to hear when Christ is passing by, who can tell but God may meet with you? If the Lord's-day is kept, there will be a face of decency in outward things, and if the Lord's day be profaned, away with the substance when the shadow is gone. I believe that the profanation of the Lord's-day, has been one great means of outward profaneness: people complain exceedingly of their children, how very undutiful they become; why how can it be otherwise, when the father and mother go out in a one-horse chaise, or their carriage, if they are higher in life, and leave their children with their servants, to do what they will on the Lord's-

day: and so there are complaints everywhere how bad servants are; you cannot get a servant that will last with you, but as soon as they can better themselves (as they call it,) away they go to another service, and while they are with you, they are guilty of loitering and everything that is detestable among servants. How can it be otherwise, when masters and mistresses set bad examples? When they go into the country, perhaps they leave their servants to themselves and to their own wicked hearts, and everything the devil can tempt them to. If your servants were on the Lord's-day bringing your children to hear, and you made your servants hear; if you made them as outwardly decent as you could, bringing them to the foot of the cross to hear of Jesus Christ, this is the way in which they would be civilized, this is the way in which their hearts would be in some measure changed. It depends upon God's Spirit to convert them in reality. I look upon all complaints of the decay of morality as taking their rise from hence, that the Lord's-day is scandalously profaned, and they that ought to set

the example to do good, are the first to set the example to profanation. Now, when there is a Society formed like this, here were servants employed in the shops, it is their own fault now if they don't go to church; the master and mistress were kept at home to attend their business, the shop is shut up, and there is an opportunity to attend the worship of God. But I have heard it very often said, O, if they would put down all shops, I should like it, but the people tell me that if I don't serve on Sunday they will not deal with me in the week, therefore if it was made general, I should rejoice in it, for I want an opportunity to meet God in His service on a Sunday. Here, then, I look upon the observance of the Lord's-day to look both backwards to the commandments before, and forwards to the precepts of the second table; and believers know, and unbelievers should hear it, that by believing we enter into this spiritual Sabbath, and by unbelieving, you shut yourselves out of it now, and by unbelieving you shut yourselves out of the eternal Sabbath hereafter.

It is not necessary for me to say anything

more in recommending the subject, therefore I must leave it now to God, and to His almighty grace; only let me beg one thing. There may be some here perhaps that can help us very little either with money or with time, but here are none here but can help us with prayer; pray for a blessing upon this Society, and pray that God may restore His Sabbaths to their former use. Let me beg of you all that have the spirit of prayer to make this petition. That God will check the profaneness and outward profanation of the Lord's-day, both for His own glory and the benefit of society; that the growing generation, servants and children, and all that belong to us, may be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord.

I have only a word or two of advice to give to the Society, and I give it as from the same fountain from which I have been speaking all along. My brethren, I entreat you, who are entered into this work, to examine your motives; there is but one true motive, and that is, are you really set out reformed yourself? an unreformed reformer is a contradiction. Have you entered into

this spiritual rest? If you have, I will tell you some of the fruits that will attend your being a member. You see a man profane the Lord's-day, try all you can by Scripture and argument to stop him; do not go to convict him first, that is not scriptural, nor will a blessing follow it; tell him his fault between you and him; tell him what laws are in force, and if he does not reform, you must certainly try what the laws will do—that is your way. And when you are going about thus, and stopping anything on the Lord's-day, I would ask you, seriously, have you never gone to convict a man in your own spirit? But before you begin, look up to God for his grace that what you are going to do, you may do it with meekness and gentleness, with a zeal for the glory of God; and I pray you, if you have entered into this rest, and if you are living in it, take care that you walk very humbly, and the more good you do, you will not be puffed up with pride, and say, Here is a Society that has done what all others have failed in. O no! if you have entered into rest, the more you do, the more humble and

the more thankful you will be; you will bless God that he should make use of such poor creatures as you for the noble purpose of magnifying his name. Pray do examine with what spirit you go to convict people, how you set about it, and if you succeed, whether God gets the glory. O that the Lord may make you eminent yourselves, for every good word and work: and as you are set about this hard work, you must expect that people will say hard things of you. There is no reformation begun but what is against the grain, against the sense of the people, and especially when against their interest; therefore arm yourselves with the grace and power of God, whatever you go about, whatever you suffer, for you will suffer. The Lord grant that you may do all with humility. I have only to beg of God that as there is but a very little time left for some of you who are in this Society, and very, very little time left for some of us to keep our Sabbath below—O that God may increase our faith! The Lord grant that we may every day live in keeping the Sabbath, and only rest unto the Lord in our hearts;

so that when death comes, we may fall asleep in the Lord, and enter upon that Sabbath which remaineth for the people of God! You will live happy, you will die happy. You will be happy for ever and ever, who by believing this day have entered into rest. O that God may bless it to your hearts, bless it to the Society, bless it to all here present, that we may really and truly know what that spiritual rest is, which believers find in the bosom of God's love to his children.

FINIS.

Macintosh, Printer, Great New Street, London.

WORKS PUBLISHED

BY

WIGHT AND BAILEY,

AT THEIR

THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY, CHELTENHAM:

AND SOLD IN LONDON

BY SEELEY, BURNSIDE, AND SEELEY; AND SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.

OCCASIONAL SERMONS preached at Cheltenham, by the Rev. F. CLOSE, M.A. 12mo., cloth, 5*s.* 6*d.*

THOUGHTS on FASTING, by the Rev. F. CLOSE, M.A. 32mo., cloth, 1*s.*

EXPERIMENTAL EDUCATION, by the AUTHOR OF "A SPONSOR'S GIFT." 12mo., cloth, 5*s.*

Lady DARLING'S YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S SUNDAY MORNINGS. 12mo., cloth, 6*s.*

Lady DARLING'S SIMPLE RULES for PERSONS in HUMBLE LIFE. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

PRAYERS in SECRET, by Mrs. R. L. HOPPER. 18mo., cloth, 2*s.*

CONVERSATIONS for SABBATH EVENINGS, on our LORD'S LIFE and MINISTRY, with 50 illustrations from the Old Masters, 7*s.* 6*d.* in case.

SHORT POEMS on SCRIPTURE TEXTS, dedicated to the Rev. F. CLOSE. 18mo., cloth, gilt edges, 1*s.*

WHITE'S (late Rev. Hugh) EARNEST APPEAL to CHRISTIANS on behalf of POSTMEN and others Employed on the LORD'S DAY. 32mo., 8*d.* per dozen.

WHITE'S (late Rev. Hugh) REMONSTRANCE on the use of CARRIAGES on the LORD'S DAY. 32mo., 4*d.* stitched, 8*d.* cloth.

A FEW REMARKS on the CHRISTIAN'S DUTY of SINGING at CHURCH. 18mo., stitched, 3*d.*

SOCINIANISM TESTED by SCRIPTURE. 18mo., stitched, 3*d.*

PRAYERS and HYMNS, on behalf of the JEWS, 32mo., gilt edges, 3*d.*

COVENANT PROMISES, selected as Sacramental Meditations. 32mo., gilt edges, 3*d.*

THOUGHTS in SUFFERING, by Miss S. BUNBURY. 32mo., silk, 2*s.*

NEW YEAR'S DAY, or Time's Memento. 32mo., cloth, 1*s.*

REFLECTIONS on CLERICAL and LAY ATTENDANCE in the BALL ROOM. 18mo., cloth, 1*s.* 6*d.*

The CHRISTIAN NURSE'S DUTY and REWARD. 18mo., gilt edges, 6*d.*

ERSKINE'S FAITH'S PLEA upon GOD'S WORD. 32mo., 2*d.*

LEIGHTON'S CHRIST the GLORY of the CHURCH. 32mo., 2*d.*

CHRIST'S HUMILIATION, by Miss S. BUNBURY. 32mo., 2*d.*

The SCHOLAR'S REWARD BOOK. 32mo., 4*d.*

The FATAL WATCH, by Mrs. R. L. HOPPER. 32mo., 1*d.*

HAPPY HARRIET, or the good effects of a Scriptural Education. 32mo., 1*d.*

POOR LAW RELIEF NO CHARITY.

A SERMON.

Poor Law Relief no Charity.

A SERMON,

Preached on the Day of *St. Simon* and *St. Jude*, 1845, at the Conſecration of a Chapel built for the inmates of the Bradfield *Union Workhouſe.*

BY THE REV. THOMAS STEVENS, M.A.
of Oriel College, Oxford; Rector of Bradfield, Berks; and ſometime Aſſiſtant Poor Law Commiſſioner.

Publiſhed by Requeſt.

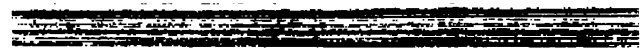
Sold by JOHN H. PARKER, Oxford; RIVINGTONS, London; and JOHNSON, Reading.

1845

To the Right Rev. Father in God,

RICHARD, LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD,

This Sermon is inſcribed with Affectionate Reſpect.



A SERMON, &c.

Theſe things I command you, that ye love one another. ST. JOHN, XV. 17.

THERE is never a ſeaſon of rejoicing which is free from imperfection, nor one in which we can be ſo happy as that nothing damps our joy. Sometimes we know, without any apparent cauſe, juſt when every thing looks moſt bright and proſperous, an inward ſecret influence is felt to ſober and to calm, and even to depreſs our ſpirits. All people are ſubject to this reſtraint of feeling in one way or another. It is experienced by the worldly man in his moſt thoughtleſs purſuit of pleaſure, no leſs than by the godly man in his heartieſt aſpirations after heavenly joy. It ſeems to be the inſeparable condition of our fallen, imperfect ſtate, according to an all-wiſe law of God's moſt gracious Providence.

We all remember how Solomon ſums up his judg-

ment on this matter. After carefully enumerating all the various ways by which he had been ſeeking happineſs, that he might ſee what was that good for the ſons of men, which they ſhould do under the ſun all the days of their life; he adds, "So I was great, and increaſed more than all that were before me in Jeruſalem, alſo my wiſdom remained with me, whatſoever mine eyes deſired I kept not from them, I withheld not mine heart from any joy, for my heart rejoiced in all my labour." "Then I looked on all the works that I had laboured to do, and behold all was vanity and vexation of ſpirit, and there was no profit under the ſun."

We can none of us gainſay this experience of Solomon. So we may as well be content to act upon it, and give up ſeeking after joys in this world, while we reſt our hearts firmly upon the hope of thoſe which are to come. Nothing does, nothing ever can ſatisfy us here. Even when we are employed, as now, in the ſpecial act of offering thanks and worſhip to Almighty God; of all employments the beſt and moſt exalted, the moſt worthy to engage the hearts and minds of reaſonable and immortal beings; on occaſions ſuch as theſe, we are unfit for any unguarded exerciſe of devotion, any unreſtrained delight. Our nature is too depraved, and our thoughts and feelings are too unchaſtened to be truſted to their own natural expreſſion. We dare not let go reſtraint and awe.

Our very grateful and earneſt offerings to God muſt all be watched and governed, leſt they ſhould grow preſumptuous and familiar.

Accordingly, we find in Holy Scripture many ſerious warnings againſt careleſs and irreverent thankſgiving and rejoicing. Much is written, both in the way of example and of precept, to make us thoughtful and afraid at ſuch a time. For inſtance, we may call to mind the judgment againſt the men of Bethſhemeſh, for their too familiar rejoicing at the recovery of the Ark, when fifty-thouſand and threeſcore and ten men were ſmitten dead. And that other ſtern reproof by God on Uzza, for his too forward confidence on a ſimilar occaſion, when he put forth his hand to ſtay the Ark, as the oxen which drew it ſtumbled, and was thereupon ſtruck dead.

And of direct precepts to be cautious in rejoicing and thankſgiving, out of the many that may occur to you as you think about them, I will notice that one in the ſecond Pſalm, where David, in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, is prophetically declaring the glad tidings of the Goſpel. He ſays, "Be wiſe now therefore, O ye kings; be inſtructed ye that are judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with *fear*, and *rejoice with trembling*." And again, that other in the twenty-fourth Pſalm, where he begins, "I will bleſs the Lord at all times. His praiſe ſhall continually be in my mouth. My ſoul ſhall make her boaſt in the

Lord." But preſently he adds, "The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that *fear* Him, and delivereth them. O *fear* the Lord, ye His ſaints, for there is no want to them that fear Him." And "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a *broken heart*, and ſaveth ſuch as be of a *contrite ſpirit*." All which ſhews plainly that he inculcates lowly, reverential fear, in the very ſame breath with his expreſſions of triumphant joy.

And if paſſages are looked for from the New Teſtament, we have that ſtriking exhortation by St. Paul, in his epiſtle to the Hebrews, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may ſerve God acceptably, with *reverence and godly fear*, for our God is a conſuming fire."

Now the obvious concluſion from all this is, that as care is neceſſary to avoid diſpleaſing God by thoughtleſſneſs and irreverence, when we come before Him with thankſgiving and rejoicing, it will be moſt ſafe for us on all ſuch occaſions to prepare ourſelves deliberately beforehand, and to reflect ſeriouſly about what we are going to do. To think much of the Holineſs and Majeſty of God, and of our own ſin and weakneſs. To occupy our minds with a lowly eſtimate of the inſignificance and emptineſs of our beſt offerings, rather than with ſatisfaction at what we bring to offer. To dwell more upon the thought of what

we have left undone, than of what has been accompliſhed; and above all to reſolve upon ſome appropriate way in which we may at once ſet ourſelves to realize that beautiful petition in the general Thankſgiving, wherein we are taught to pray that our hearts may be *unfeignedly* thankful, and that we may ſhew forth God's praiſe "not only with our lips, but *in our lives.*"

In this ſpirit let us all endeavour to keep our preſent feſtival, and let us apply theſe precepts to our own caſe to day.

Aſſuredly we may rejoice to day at the completion of our work. It is a comfortable thing to have been allowed to ſet apart this place to holy purpoſes for ever, and we will praiſe God for it. Only let us take heed how we praiſe Him, and in what ſpirit we look upon our work. The petition to the Biſhop, which was read at the opening of the ſervice, has ſet forth the ſpecial want which this place is intended to provide for. But to make the matter quite clear to thoſe who have not been informed of it before, it may be well to repeat the ſtatement.

Of late, the Workhouſe for this Union has had no proper place in it for celebrating Divine worſhip. And the Guardians have been aſſured that the law does not enable them to raiſe the funds to build one. In the Workhouſe, as at firſt conſtructed, a room was reſerved for religious uſes only; but this has ſince

been neceſſarily taken for a bedroom, and the common dining hall has been the only place within the Workhouſe which could be uſed as a ſubſtitute for a Chapel.

We have all felt the great evil of this arrangement, and we have united to provide the remedy. This Chapel has been built and conſecrated on purpoſe to accommodate the inmates of the Workhouſe. Henceforth thoſe aged poor, who have no hope of any other home on this ſide of the grave, and the orphan and deſerted children, and thoſe who are ſtill more to be pitied, adults as well as children, whoſe want is all occaſioned by their wicked abandoned habits; theſe poor unhappy creatures, while they are ſheltered in our Workhouſe, will now have the ineſtimable advantage which the Houſe of God affords. Here they may meet to confeſs their ſins, and to pray together for mercy and forgiveneſs. Here they may receive that ſpiritual help and comfort which the ſervice and the Sacraments of the Church afford, without any offence or violence to their feelings of awe and reverence, which will henceforth be cheriſhed and improved, inſtead of being ſhocked and ſtifled.

Now all this is a real advantage, and we may and will rejoice that it has been attained. Only let us take due care that we are not inconſiderate in our ſatisfaction at this work. For there is much connected with the relief to our poor people here, which we ought to lay to heart, and which ought to make us

humble, and aſhamed. We have indeed now remedied one very crying evil; but there ſtill remains much more that we ought to do, before we reſt contented with the proviſion for our poor. All that we have done does not make the Workhouſe a comfortable place to live in. The Workhouſe is not, and I will go further and ſay, it *ought* not to be a place in which the *comforts* of the poor are ſtudied; but one in which their actual *neceſſities* are *teſted*, and relieved. And therefore we never ſhould allow ourſelves to look upon this inſtitution as furniſhing ſatisfactory relief for the *worthy* poor of our reſpective pariſhes.

Let not our gratification then, at having raiſed this Chapel, make us think at all more tenderly of the workhouſe, as if it had now become a fit and comfortable aſylum for thoſe of our poor neighbours who are *deſerving of our reſpect*, though unable to maintain themſelves. Undoubtedly the relief which is given here is neceſſary to be provided, and the workhouſe is a valuable eſtabliſhment, and with the Chaplain and the Chapel, it is complete and unobjectionable in itſelf, well ſuited for adminiſtering that deſcription of relief for which it is intended. But that muſt not be miſcalled *charity*.

The poor laws never were *intended*, and never will be able to ſupply the place of Chriſtian Charity. The workhouſe is not a charitable inſtitution, and relief adminiſtered from the poor rates, either in the

workhouſe or out of it, is not *charitable* relief. It is wanting in all the eſſential characteriſtics of ſuch relief. And ſome of the greateſt ſocial evils under which our country ſuffers may be traced to miſconception on this important point.

Before our contributions for the wants of others can be ſaid to have in them anything of the character of charity, *love*, and not the *law*, muſt fix the proportion of the payments. It is a perfect mockery of good principles and good feeling to allege that our payment of a poor rate is at all more really charitable, than the payment of any other legal charge upon our property, whether it be for the repair of the roads, or purpoſes of police, or for any other public good whatever. But in theſe latter days our hearts have grown ſo cold, and our principles are ſunk ſo low, that we ſeem to have forgotten that, as members of Chriſt's Body, we owe a deep obligation towards our poorer fellow members, involving important privileges for ourſelves. We do not practically confeſs that it is an *eſſential duty of our Church* to ſupport her own needy poor, and ſo there has ceaſed to exiſt among us any general effective ſyſtem of making free-will offerings to God, for the maintenance of our worthy brethren in neceſſity, who are all the while filling that moſt honourable poſition towards us of being the repreſentatives of our moſt bleſſed Lord and Maſter, who are always to remain among us, on purpoſe to receive our expreſſions of love towards Him.

Of late, it has been thought enough if all the poor of our pariſhes, whether reſpectable or depraved, are dealt with on one footing in the matter of relief. All who are in want of the neceſſaries of life, whatever their characters may be, are now to be referred at once to that means of ſupport which is obtained for them by force of law, to that fund which is made up of exacted contributions, moſt grudged by thoſe who pay them, which exacted fund *ought in duty* to be diſtributed on principles of ſtern juſtice only, by thoſe who are entruſted with it, *according to the ſtatutes* by which it has been raiſed, inſtead of by the happy rule of Chriſtian loving-kindneſs.

And ſhould not the thought of this make us ſad and humble? Is it any wonder that, under ſuch a ſtate of things, ſociety is out of joint? That, as a Church, we are divided? Without that bond of love, which alone can prove to us that we are true diſciples of our aſcended Lord? How may we dare expect that we can hold together and be ſtrong, while our love for one another is not cheriſhed as a vital principle of action? And how can we dare aſſert that we even profeſs this principle of love, while we make no real effort, as a body, to keep our love alive, while we do nothing really and ſyſtematically, as a Church, to ſupport our own afflicted members. Nothing as we ought to do, to obey that plain commandment in the text, and in the verſes before the text, all of

which are ſo evidently addreſſed to us in our corporate capacity, as members altogether of our Lord, branches of the true Vine, His Body.

Let us look calmly and deliberately at thoſe many paſſages in the Bible, which ſet forth the duty and the privilege of *giving* to ſupport the poor, and let us anſwer it to ourſelves if our payments to the poor rate can be reaſonably thought to ſatisfy their requirements.

Again, let us look fairly at the bleſſings which are promiſed to free giving for the poor, through the fear and love of God, and at the curſes which are threatened for withholding of our ſubſtance from them, and then ſay whether the poor rate relief or any other relief which does not conſiſt of our free-will, cheerful offerings, can entitle us to hope that we ſhall either ſhare the promiſed bleſſings, or avoid the threatened curſes.

As I ſaid before, there is, there can be nothing of the character of love, in the neceſſary payment of a definitely proportioned *tax*. And, depend upon it, there is, there can be nothing like real charity in the attempt to grant away the proceeds of this tax more freely than has been contemplated by the ſtatutes that have raiſed it. So long as we hold back from acknowledging it to be our duty, as a Church, to ſupport *all thoſe* of our poor whoſe conduct is *irreproachable* out of hearty free-will offerings, ſo long we may expect to be wanting in life and vigour, to be

divided among ourſelves, and weak in our growth in Grace.

As a body, we cannot advance in holineſs except we advance in love. Love to our great Head, and, through Him, to all the fellow-members with us of His Body. And that is cold and empty love which is not made manifeſt by acts. Love cannot be kept alive, much leſs will it increaſe and grow, by mere profeſſion. And although we may not undervalue any private efforts of benevolence, ſtill, it muſt be borne in mind that the ſeparate acts of any ſingle members will not be reckoned as the acts of their ſociety. We are all ſubject to a two-fold reſponſibility. We muſt not only do what is right in our capacity as private Chriſtians; but we muſt alſo take care to live as faithful Citizens of our Zion, and promote, by all means in our power, the well-doing of our whole body. If we would have our Church to grow in life, to gain in more rich meaſure the gifts of God's Holy Spirit, we muſt ſtrive, as far as in us lies, to make Her doings *as a body*, as well as our own private conduct, more and more conformed to the high ſtandard of our profeſſion.

It would be obviouſly impoſſible, on the preſent occaſion, to do more than take brief notice of the great difference between the principles of Church relief, and the ſtate proviſion for the poor. There is not time to trace the application of theſe principles

through their details of practice. But it will be proper to obſerve that as the poor law ſcheme cannot take the place of Church relief, ſo neither, in theſe days, can the Church fund be well adminiſtered without the poor law to fall back upon.

St. Paul, in his epiſtles, has given very plain directions for the excluſion of the idle and the profligate from the benefits of the Church's alms. Thus, he writes, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat. For we hear that there are ſome which walk among you diſorderly, working not at all, but are buſy bodies. Now them that are ſuch, we command and exhort, by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work, and eat their own bread." And again, in his epiſtle to Timothy, he writes reſpecting the relief of widows, telling him that he was to "honour widows that were widows indeed." And he deſcribes ſuch as being "deſolate, and truſting in God, and continuing in ſupplications and prayers night and day." But the "younger widows" were to be refuſed. And here too, he ſpeaks of the duty of relations to provide for their own, ſaying that "if any provide not for his own, and eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel." Again, "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be

charged," that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

There are other paſſages to the ſame effect, which ſhew that the alms of the Church are not to be uſed for the ſupport of idle perſons, nor of ſcandalous offenders. But how could we refuſe to help ſuch perſons, if there were no other fund by which they could be kept from ſtarving? How could we withhold our alms even from ſuppoſed impoſtors, who might profeſs that they were periſhing by hunger, if we had no ſufficient ſyſtem eſtabliſhed, and controlled by Law, to which we might with confidence aſſign them?

No, my Brethren, let us not complain that the law is not kind enough to ſuit our morbid ſelf-indulgent feelings; but let us ſee the truth, that if we have the heart to make real ſyſtematic ſacrifices to prove and warm our love, we ſhall not have occaſion to object againſt the hardſhips of the Poor Law.

We muſt agree that there is much in all this ſubject which at leaſt demands our calm conſideration. We cannot hide it from ourſelves that the preſent practice of our Church, in matters of relief, is miſerably defective. We live in trying times, and God Himſelf only knows what difficulties are yet in ſtore for us. We are weakened by diviſions which He alone can heal. Let us lay this to heart, and as we pray eſpecially to day for Unity of Spirit, let us all ſincerely ſtrive to gain it.

And here I will venture to ſuggeſt that this is not likely to be accompliſhed by giving our chief attention to thoſe ſubjects concerning which we are already diſpoſed to differ. Surely our ſafeſt courſe muſt be to ſet ourſelves heartily to amend thoſe faults of practice which we all can lament in common. The more we work together in attempting to improve our practice, the more we ſhall certainly approach towards true harmony of opinion.*

We of this pariſh, who have lately been learning to chant the ſervice of the Church, ſhall do well to keep in mind the inſtruction which has been ſo kindly given to us, and remember how frequently we have been told that ſo *long as we are only learning*, if we would not ſpoil our muſic we muſt each one of us look up often to our leader, take the tone accurately from him, mark our own time correctly, attend cloſely to our own part, and not ſing out too loud or boiſ-

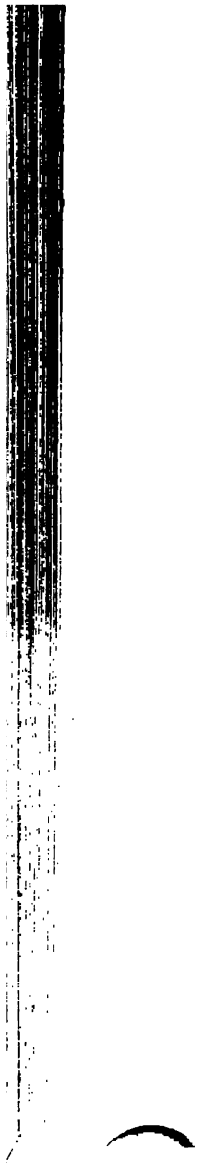
* The Rubrics for the Communion Service, in the Prayer book, give very plain directions as to the method of Collecting the Church alms. And they ſhew, [what has been too much forgotten] that the Churchwardens are to aſſiſt the Miniſter in the diſtribution of them. It is not eaſy to eſtimate the advantage which is ſure to follow, wherever the Lay and Spiritual Officers of the Church in any Pariſh unite in earneſt to carry out Her rules for adminiſtering relief, upon the principles laid down by the Apoſtles. Such co-operation of the officers of the Church in the performance of their duties will tend to keep up a more general intereſt in the well ordering of a Pariſh than can be obtained by any other means.

terouſly. We ſhall miſs a great advantage if we do not obſerve in this a leſſon for Eternity. Whatever we may be hereafter, we are but *learners* now, on probation for the heavenly Choir; and if we would be admitted to chant everlaſting praiſes with the Hoſts in the realms above, we muſt make it the great buſineſs of our preſent lives to learn to keep time and tune with Heaven. Each one of us for himſelf muſt conſtantly look upwards to our great Leader, and as we earneſtly endeavour to take our intonations from Him, we muſt fix our attention cloſely on our own part, in the muſic of the Church, and watch carefully and conſtantly againſt our own ſtrong tendency to err, as well as againſt the danger of being drawn out of tune by others; always taking heed that we do not grow too loud and overbearing in our confidence.*

May God of his great mercy help us in all our endeavours to become more fit to worſhip Him, and may He bring all our hearts and lives to perfect harmony with His Saints and Angels, in praiſing Him for ever.

* Full choral ſervice was performed at the conſecration of this Chapel. Fifty-two perſons, members of the congregation of Bradfield Church, who have been trained in a ſinging claſs by Mr. Binfield, of Reading, ſang in the Choir.

C. WHITTINGHAM, CHISWICK.



A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF LLANDAFF,

ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1845.

LONDON:
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

THE PROPHETICAL OFFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER:

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF LLANDAFF,

ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1845,

AT THE

Triennial Visitation,

OF

EDWARD, LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF,

AND

PUBLISHED AT THE UNITED REQUEST OF HIS LORDSHIP AND THE CLERGY OF THE DEANERY.

BY

THOMAS WILLIAMS, M.A.
ARCHDEACON OF LLANDAFF,
AND EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP.

LONDON:
FRANCIS & JOHN RIVINGTON,
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE:
AND SOLD BY
WEBBER, CARDIFF; LISTER, COWBRIDGE; HEATH, MONMOUTH;
FRENCH, NEATH; REES, ABERGAVENNY;
HUMPAGE, BRECON, &c. &c.
1845.

TO THE RIGHT REV.

EDWARD, LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF,

AND THE REV.

THE CLERGY

PRESENT AT HIS LORDSHIP'S VISITATION,

IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH,

The following Sermon,

PUBLISHED AT THEIR UNITED REQUEST,

IS

HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

A

SERMON,

&c.

Rom. xii. 6.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."

It is at any time, and under any circumstances, a work of deep and serious responsibility, to stand forth as the minister of God's word, and to deliver his message from this place. Never indeed can it be entered upon without the humbling thought, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Never must it be undertaken, without an earnest prayer for guidance and for grace, that we may be enabled to speak "the things which become sound doctrine [1]," and "things wherewith one may edify another [2]."

[1] Titus ii. 1. [2] Rom. xiv. 19.

But how are these natural feelings of insufficiency increased,—how much more urgent and needful seems this recourse to the "Father of lights" on occasions like the present, when we have to speak, not as the pastor to his own appointed and peculiar flock, but as one who is also an elder to his brethren in the ministry; those who are pastors like himself, his fellow-helpers, fellow-labourers, in the work of the Lord. We have, however, now, as ever, the Lord's gracious assurance to look to, and while we depend and lean upon his promises, we may expect to realize the full blessing of those comforting words, wherewith He once encouraged a faint-hearted, though faithful servant, "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say[3]."

With this hope, then, I now enter on my task, while to those who can best appreciate as well its importance as its responsibility, I would say earnestly in the words of the apostle, "BRETHREN, pray for us."

The passage which I have chosen for my text is, as you are well aware, taken from the latter portion of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. He had therein previously stated and established the grand fundamental doctrines of the Gospel; the guilt, the corruption, the ruin of man as the result

[3] Exod. iv. 12.

and consequence of the fall, his complete justification by faith in the atoning blood of Christ; his sanctification by the renewing influence of the Spirit, and his adoption by grace into the family of God. No where indeed in Scripture are these subjects more regularly or systematically treated. No where are they presented to us with greater fulness, clearness, and simplicity.

But the apostle does not leave them without practical application and improvement. He does not commit them to us, as barren and uninfluential truths, nor advance them as mere matters of speculation or opinion. For he proceeds to press them on the hearts and consciences of Christians, as powerful motives to vital godliness, as principles which were to guide and regulate their lives.

As the first result of these truths, he urges upon all the members of Christ's Church, an entire and unreserved surrender of themselves, "a living sacrifice unto God." He calls upon them to give their own selves unto the Lord, and then from the same principles, and upon the same motives, he insists upon each, in his own station, devoting his several gifts, "differing according to the grace that is given to us," to the mutual advantage of that body of which he is but a constituent member or limb. For "we, being many, are one

body in Christ, and every one members one of another[1]."

And for ourselves, my brethren, though "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God[2]," we are but members still, having in the body our own peculiar office and functions, our own duty and employment assigned to us of God, "Who divideth to every man severally as he will."

In the words, however, of my text, we seem to be peculiarly addressed, or at any rate, this exhortation appears to have been expressly directed to those who held that station and office in the Church, whereunto the Lord has in his mercy called us. On this account then, it will furnish no unsuitable nor inappropriate subject for our consideration upon the present occasion.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace which is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith."

But is it ours to *prophesy?* Is it any part of our work or office? Undoubtedly it is in the sense here given to that word by the apostle. It is not only *a* part, but a very main and essential part of our duty, one which requires all our care and diligence; one which calls for the exercise and improvement of all the faculties and gifts which

[1] Rom. xii. 5. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 1.

God has bestowed upon us. But what is this sense, or in what way is it permitted to us to prophesy? Not assuredly in the sense of foretelling things to come, or proclaiming beforehand, the long-settled purpose or counsels of God, for we neither claim nor expect those extraordinary gifts, which He from time to time vouchsafed to his chosen servants of old, of predicting long before events, which when fulfilled, would establish his prescience, and so redound to his glory.

In *this* sense, though it is not ours to limit the power, nor yet to know the plans of God, "whose judgments are unsearchable, and whose ways past finding out[6]:" in *this* sense, it would seem that prophecies have already *failed*,—failed not as having come short of their accomplishment, nor as having left one jot or one tittle which they have promised without fulfilment, or which shall not yet be fulfilled to the letter in their season, but *failed* in their exercise as having already completed their design, and fully answered that end for which God did send them forth, and therefore to be looked for no longer in the economy of his grace.

But the prophecy spoken of in my text is the *exposition of Scripture;* the declaring of God's will from God's own word, which some perhaps in the early Church did, under the more immediate

[6] Rom. xi. 33.

inspiration and extraordinary direction of the Spirit, and which still belongs to our duty and office, though entitled to expect but his ordinary, yet all-sufficient guidance.

Expounders of Scripture, we are told by the learned Bishop Horsley, were called prophets, because their office in the primitive Church stood in the same relation to the office of the apostles, as the prophets under the law did to that of Moses; for the Jewish prophets were guardians and expounders of the law and revelation which Moses published, and so the prophets in the primitive Church were not publishers of the gospel, but expounders of what the apostles had previously taught.

It is indeed manifest, that the words prophet and prophecy, are in very many passages of the New Testament synonymous with interpreter or teacher, interpretation or teaching. They are thus used as well in the Acts of the Apostles as in the Epistles of St. Paul, and in *this sense*, surely, the office of a prophet is ours, and prophecy is an essential and an important part of our duty.

We have indeed no new revelation entrusted to us; we have no fresh message to deliver; but it is our work faithfully and fully to declare the whole counsel of God, as already recorded in the Scriptures; to explain, to open, to interpret his

word, to search out the mind of the Spirit in all that is written therein, to shew what God has spoken, and what is his purpose and his will, as gathered from his living oracles. A most weighty and responsible work is this. For God's word is that which He ordinarily uses for the purpose of conviction, conversion, and edification.

It is under the preaching of the word, and instrumentally *by* the preaching of the word, that the heart is pricked, the conscience wounded, and the sinner led to cry out and ask, "What must I do to be saved?" For this purpose the word of God, interpreted and explained, enlarged upon and enforced, has often been found "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword [7]," and "like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces [8]."

For conversion again; what draws the awakened sinner to his God? what but that same word, with all its gracious promises, its comforting assurances, its affectionate entreaties, its earnest invitations? what but these, interpreted and explained, urged and applied by God's ministering servants in the discharge of their prophetical office, while the Spirit, whose peculiar and appropriate work it is, and without whom we can do nothing, brings home that word with power and with effect unto the heart?

[7] Heb. iv. 12.

[8] Jer. xxiii. 29.

In the edifying, again, and building up of God's people, does He not employ the same instrumentality? Is it not written, "He gave some, apostles; and some, *prophets;* and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the *perfecting* of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ [9]:" and is not that same word, which by God's blessing, in the hands of the prophet or interpreter, breaks the hard and stony heart, found just as efficacious to build up the believer in our most holy faith, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ [1]."

Surely, then, we cannot rate too highly the importance of the prophet's office in interpreting and explaining the word of God. It may seem a weak and unlikely instrument to produce such great results, but it is that which God hath appointed, honoured, blessed and owned, in that it hath pleased Him "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

If then it is ours to prophesy, to interpret that is, and to explain, the word of God, and if that duty be of the importance which I have attached to it, let us in the next place inquire whether we

[9] Eph. iv. 11.

[1] Eph. iv. 13.

have any authoritative rule to guide us in this arduous work; whether we have any distinct principle laid down, which we may apply to the whole circle of our teaching, and to which we ought continually to look, in the course and order of our ministry.

This too is surely a serious as well as an appropriate inquiry.

Such a rule, then, such a principle, may I think be found in the words before us. "Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the *proportion* of faith." This phrase, the proportion of faith, occurs no where else in Scripture, and has therefore given rise to some difficulties and doubts, and has been by different commentators variously interpreted and explained. Into such matters, however, it is not my design to enter, but taking the expression in that sense which seems most agreeable to the general tenor of God's word, as well as most appropriate to our present purpose, to seek in it a rule for our teaching, and a guide in our office, as prophets and interpreters.

By prophesying then according to the *proportion* or *analogy* of faith, I would understand, the interpreting of God's word so as to give to each portion thereof its due prominence, place, and connexion.

If we would be faithful to our trust, we must not only declare the whole counsel of God,

but we must "speak *as* the oracles of God[2];" give to each separate truth its own due prominence and weight, to every portion of the Christian scheme its proper rank and station. What is made prominent in God's word we must make prominent too; what occupies the chief place in his oracles, must have the like station assigned to it by us; whatever is brought fully into view, must not be treated with reserve; while whatever is left in shadow, or but darkly sketched, we must leave even as God has left it; not daring rashly to lift the veil, but seeking to deal therewith but as He Himself in his word doth lead us by the hand. His secret things, his deep things we know not, and we cannot know *now*, but we shall know hereafter; and when we attempt to throw into a full blaze of light, that which God has left dim and obscure, we do but darken counsel by words without knowledge. We seem to step out of our office as prophets or interpreters, and to venture on another into which we have no right to intrude.

But if we neglect this rule of giving to each portion of truth its proper place, what distorted views of the teaching of God's word may we not afford? How far shall we be from "rightly dividing the word of truth?" We may preach

[2] I Pet. iv. 11.

that which is *a* truth, yet if we assign to it a place not really belonging to it according to the *analogy* of faith, truth itself may lead to dangerous errors, and but delude or deceive those that hear.

How necessary then to observe this rule, and how carefully was it observed of the apostles themselves, our models and our patterns; with them *grand fundamental* truths invariably occupied the chief and prominent place; they stand out in their writings in bold relief, while others in due relation are grouped around.

Look for instance at St. Paul; hear his own declaration concerning his ministry: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a *wise* master-builder, I have laid the *foundation*[3]." And what this foundation, this grand fundamental truth, to which he as a wise master-builder had given this place, was, he soon informs us; "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" and to shew again the place which Christ crucified held in his scheme of truth, we find him declaring, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified[4]."

Search then the whole records of his ministry, trace and scan every vestige of his teaching, whether in his history as recorded in the Acts, or

[3] 1 Cor. iii. 10.

[4] 1 Cor. ii. 2.

in his own Epistles to the several Churches which he had planted, and over which he watched, and you will find this great and essential truth occupying precisely the same place and prominence in all his teaching and in all his preaching. From the time that "the scales fell from his eyes, when he first preached Christ in the synagogues, until we leave him a prisoner at Rome, expounding and testifying the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus[5];" this held the same station, the first, the chief, the prominent position. This was the centre as it were of the circle, the main figure in the landscape, to which all other objects seemed but subsidiary and subordinate, and without which they would have presented no other than a confused and an unmeaning sketch.

And must not the same place be given to "Christ crucified" in the exercise of our office as prophets or preachers? Undoubtedly it must. For to assign to this great truth any other than the foremost position bestowed upon it by the apostle, would be a departure from the proportion or analogy of the faith, and must lead to a most inadequate and distorted view of the Gospel.

We may preach what we will, and how we will, but unless we set Christ crucified in his rightful position, and give Him due pre-eminence, we can

[5] Acts ix. 18.

look for no blessing or result from all our labour; we shall be indeed but labouring in vain, and spending our strength for nought. There will be a radical and an incurable defect in our ministry, which must be discovered and amended before the Lord's work can be expected to prosper in our hands.

Unlike the "wise Master-builder," we shall then be building without a foundation; and bestow upon the edifice whatever pains and care we may, ornament and elaborate it as we will, it can possess neither stability nor worth. Our Lord's own words are, "*I*, if *I* be lifted from the earth, will draw all men unto me[6]." So that unless Jesus Christ be lifted up and evidently set forth crucified amongst our people, we have no right to look for either blessing or success[7]. We have not used the means; we have no warrant to expect the end. Sinners will never so be won to God, or rescued from the power of Satan.

Christ's death, atonement, great salvation, is the grand theme of Scripture; thither do all the types and prophecies lead, while this forms the very groundwork of the Gospel, and is the very life and soul of the Christian scheme; to neglect or treat this subject, then, with reserve, would assuredly lay us open to the Lord's rebuke to

[6] John xii. 32.

[7] Gal. iii. 1.

the scribes, the interpreters of old, whom He charged with omitting "the weightier matters of the law," while all their care was devoted to objects, right perhaps and needful in themselves, but yet comparatively of minor consideration and importance; "these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone[8]."

The same rule must still be ours, for while we give to "weightier matters," "first principles," their due prominence and priority, we must not dismiss from the circle of our teaching *any* truth which has a place in the oracles of God; while none is to be raised beyond its legitimate station, none sunk below its rightful rank,—so none must be *omitted* or suppressed, none neglected or passed by.

If we would prophesy according to the *proportion* or *analogy* of faith, our teaching will not be limited to any one favourite subject, or confined to any single set of truths, however necessary or important; our commission is, "to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature[9]," "teaching them to observe and to do *all* things whatsoever Christ has commanded them[1]." While as prophets or interpreters of Scripture, we read of that which is to form the subject-matter of our teaching, "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God,

[8] Matt. xxiii. 23. [9] Mark xvi. 15. [1] Matt. xxviii. 20.

and is *profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be *perfect*, *throughly* furnished unto *all* good works[2]." As *all* Scripture, then, is profitable, while each separate portion has its own peculiar use, for which God has sent it forth; no single part can be omitted or set aside without guilt as regards ourselves, and loss and danger as regards our hearers. We may not, we must not, so deal with God's word. We dare not add to it, neither dare we take any thing away from it.

In the human frame, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it: touch but one of those parts which "seem most feeble," and yet the injury is felt through the whole frame and structure; strike off but the slightest portion of these bodies, so fearfully and wonderfully made, and the loss is sensibly experienced through the mass. And must it not be so with God's most perfect work, the Gospel of his grace? Is not this Gospel one grand harmonious whole, so nicely adjusted, so rarely combined, that not the least part or portion of its substance can be lost, without danger and injury to the whole?

We must carefully guard, then, against our own predilections and antipathies, our own sympathies and prejudices, lest we preach a *defective*, as well as a disproportioned Gospel.

[2] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

We have all, perhaps, our own favourite subjects, our more congenial topics; those on which we would, therefore, more willingly and more frequently dwell. To some it is delightful to enlarge continually on the promises of God, the privileges of his people, the fulness of his love, the freeness of his grace,—blessed topics all, glorious and refreshing truths, and such too as occupy a large space in the oracles of God, and may well therefore claim a full measure and an ample breadth in the circle of our teaching. But still not to the exclusion or undue suppression of other truths. We must sometimes persuade by the terrors of the Lord, as well as allure by the promises and prospect of his love. "God is love," and mercy is that in which He delighteth. It is his pleasant and congenial work. Nor can we too highly magnify that love, or too strongly exhibit its most extraordinary manifestation; "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life[3]." But yet we must not forget that justice, righteousness, and holiness, are his essential attributes too; that though He is gracious, and merciful, and long-suffering, yet that He will by no means clear the guilty; that if a man will not turn, "he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made

[3] John iii. 16.

it ready[4]," and that "he is just," though "the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

While the Gospel, the glad tidings of salvation, is our special theme, (for, blessed be God, we are ministers of the Gospel, not scribes under the law,) yet still the law must have its proper place and due proportion in our teaching. It must be set forth in all its strictness and severity, in all its breadth and spirituality. We have, beyond a doubt, to deal with the law, and to preach the law, not indeed as a covenant, "for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight[5]." But "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" it is the medium of conviction, and conviction is the very first step in the sinner's progress unto God. The law was the instrument which our Lord Himself employed with the young ruler[6] for that very purpose. It was that, too, which wrought effectually by the apostle's confession in his own heart[7]; and the law proved to him, as it has proved to thousands now before the throne, "a schoolmaster to bring him unto Christ."

But not merely as the instrument of conviction, to stop the mouth, and bring man in guilty before God, must we give the law its proper place, its due proportion, in our ministry. It is

[4] Ps. vii. 12. [5] Rom. iii. 20. [6] Matt. xix. 16. [7] Rom. vii. 7.

also now, as ever, our *rule of life*, a light unto our feet, and a lantern to our paths; the same unerring standard of right and wrong under the new as under the old dispensation. And if Christ has delivered us from it as a covenant, He has returned it to us sanctioned and confirmed, as our unchanging rule, and our unfailing guide.

The law, then, with all its requirements, with all its bearings on daily life, with all its checks upon the heart and the affections, with all its minute directions for each varied relation and condition of our being, must find its due place in every well-ordered circle of instruction: for while to dwell continually on its terrors or its demands, might lead a sinner to despair, or drive him to a dogged and hardened continuance in iniquity; to neglect their exhibition altogether would undoubtedly be followed by a want of those deep convictions of sin, which lead most surely and directly to the cross, while the standard of holiness would be lowered, and vital practical godliness be too apt to give place to inconsistent profession or antinomian delusion.

And this surely may illustrate the necessity of giving to each truth a place, and of seeking to embrace within the circle of our ministry every part and portion of God's word.

But there is yet another point which seems involved in the rule suggested by my text. We

must not only give every truth a place, and to each that prominence which is its due, but we must carefully preserve the scriptural connexion between these several parts. The words of St. Peter are surely applicable to the whole compass of God's oracles [8], "No prophecy of Scripture is of any *private* interpretation." No part, that is, is to be separated or severed from the connexion in which it is found, none to be construed irrespectively of the remainder of God's word, or exhibited out of the relation in which it stands to other plain and substantial truths, by which it may be modified or explained, and without reference to which it may give the most inadequate and erroneous impressions to our hearers.

Scripture disjointed and broken into fragments may be made to speak any language, and wrested to purposes the very opposite to that for which it was written. Even truth so treated may cease to be truth at all, or at any rate become the medium of ideas the most mistaken and confused. It is so even with the writings of men; there is in them such relation and connexion as often to make it difficult, if not impossible, to determine the sense of a single period when detached from the rest; and far more so must this be the case with the symmetrical and harmonious word of God; its mutual dependencies and affinities are so intimate and com-

[8] 2 Pet. i. 20.

plete, that it should ever be examined and viewed as one grand connected whole, or at least the relation of each separate part to that whole should never be lost sight of, while we discharge our duty as interpreters and prophets. We must then beware lest we be found putting asunder what God has Himself united together.

Thus while we preach "Jesus Christ and him crucified," as the sole foundation of the sinner's hope of pardon, acceptance, and salvation; while we set Him forth as the alone Saviour and Redeemer; while we shun not to declare the freeness and the fulness of his atonement, the sufficiency of his sacrifice, the completeness of his redemption; we must never forget to connect with these truths their intended influence and effect, or to shew the proper consequence of their heartfelt reception as exhibited by the apostle, "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again[9]."

Thus connected, the doctrine of the cross is a doctrine according to godliness, the very source from which all holy obedience flows: but dissever the doctrine from its proper use and end its practical weight and influence, and the very

[9] 2 Cor. v. 14.

mercy and forgiveness of God is used as a motive for a continuance in sin, his loving-kindness and his willingness to pardon do but lead to sterner rebellion, and more determined opposition to his will.

Again, while we hesitate not to declare, in the language of Scripture, that "we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law[1]," or in that of our Church, founded upon Scripture, that we are "justified by faith only," we must never forget to shew the connexion between a true faith and a holy life, things inseparably united as cause and effect; so that the one may be as evidently known by the other as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

Knowing, again, the helplessness and utter insufficiency of men, that we are not "sufficient to think any thing as of ourselves;" that "we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will[2]." We must not hesitate to teach these truths, or to refer all power and allability for good to the help of God's Spirit. We must point distinctly to Him as the Lord and Giver of life; we must lead men to look for his assistance, and to seek his aid,

[1] Rom. iii. 28. [2] Art. x.

while we warn them, that without Him they can do nothing. But we must connect therewith the duty of working *under* that promised influence and guidance; we must shew our hearers the folly as well as the guilt of vainly expecting assistance from above, while they sit supine and listless, without effort and without exertion. The connexion in Scripture between the promised aid and the required exertion is clear; it must be made clear in our interpretation too. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: FOR it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure[3]."

Again, we may not exclude from the circle of our teaching "the godly consideration of our election in Christ, full as it is of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons[4];" nor need we fear to give it its rightful place, while we connect therewith, as the apostle ever does, the necessity of holiness as its witness and its proof.

Is he speaking to the Roman Christians as the elect people of God, how clearly is the connexion shewn; "Beloved of God, called to be *saints*[5]," or to the Thessalonians, how does he mark the danger of any attempt at separation; "God has not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness[6];"

[3] Phil. ii. 12.
[4] Art. xvii.
[5] Rom. i. 7.
[6] 1 Thess. iv. 7.

while to Timothy again he witnesses the same intimate and close conjunction, when speaking of God's election, he says, "Who hath called me with a *holy* calling[7]."

Thus throughout our ministry, if we would prophesy according to the proportion or analogy of faith, we must not only endeavour to grasp the whole compass of Christian truth, but to preserve also that vital connexion which links every individual portion to the whole, privilege must be connected with responsibility, principle with duty, promise with exertion, faith with works, patience with hope, love with labour; since by a want of this combined exhibition of Gospel truth, we shall certainly fail in setting it before our hearers in that fair proportioned beauty and completeness wherewith it appears revealed in the oracles of God, while these disjointed fragments will surely give them no just conception of its real nature, nor yet of its surpassing excellence or perfection.

And now, my brethren, it is time to draw these observations to a close. It has been therein my aim and endeavour, however feebly and imperfectly executed, to point out the nature and scope of our office as prophets or interpreters of God's word, as well as briefly to illustrate those principles

[7] 2 Tim. i. 9.

which might safely guide us in its exercise and use, and which seemed fairly deducible from the words of my text.

Such an attempt is surely neither inappropriate nor unsuitable; for if we look back upon the past history of the Church, or abroad upon her present condition, is it not in the misunderstanding of this office, or in the neglect of these principles, simple and obvious as they seem, that we may discern the fertile source of mistake, confusion, and debate? while from the want of a well-proportioned, a full, and a connected exhibition of Christian truth, from the unmerited depression, or from the undue exaltation, from the rare recurrence, or from the entire suppression of some Christian doctrine, from its unconnected statement or its disjointed presentation, have surely flowed those innumerable forms of error which have distracted and perplexed its members.

We ought, however, to recollect, that a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to us, while it is the revealed word of God with which we have to deal. There are therein no new truths for us to bring forth, neither are there any old ones which we may modify or conceal. We have nothing to do either with *development* or *reserve;* for we may not add any thing to, or diminish aught from, the *full* and *perfect* oracles of God. We must beware of tampering therewith, either

by teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, or by keeping back any thing which He has been pleased to reveal. We are not *apostles*, but *prophets;* not the proclaimers of a new revelation, but the guardians and interpreters of an old. The subject-matter is determined for us, and it belongs not to us to decide what is and what is not to be taught, for that were to interfere with the prerogative of God; but if any man speak in the office which we hold, he *must* speak "as the oracles of God;" he must teach *what* they teach, and *as* they teach, in the same order, the same measure, and the same connexion. For thus only will he "prophesy according to the proportion of faith," or be found fulfilling the admonition of the same apostle, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly *dividing* the word of truth[8]."

[8] 2 Tim. ii. 15.

THE END.

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

By the same Author,

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED AT THE PRIMARY VISITATION OF THE ARCH-DEACONRY OF LLANDAFF,

IN MAY, 1844.

RIVINGTONS,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL.

THE PEOPLE'S DUTY TO THE CLERGY IN THEIR AIM AT RITUAL CONFORMITY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED

IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN'S-IN-THE-FIELDS,

LIVERPOOL,

UPON THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, 1844.

BY

THE REV. CECIL WRAY, M. A.,

ONE OF THE INCUMBENTS.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

Published at the request of the Congregation.

"ALTHOUGH THE KEEPING OR OMITTING OF A CEREMONY, IN ITSELF CONSIDERED, IS A SMALL THING; YET THE WILFUL AND CONTEMPTUOUS TRANSGRESSION OF A COMMON ORDER AND DISCIPLINE IS NO SMALL OFFENCE BEFORE GOD."—*Preface to the Book of Common Prayer. On Ceremonies.*

LONDON:
G. & J. RIVINGTON, ST. PAULS' CHURCH-YARD.
LIVERPOOL: W. GRAPEL, CHURCH-STREET.
1845.

"For the healing of breaches, uniting those that differ, and preserving the Church's peace, we know of no better thing nor more efficacious than our SET LITURGY; there being no such way to keep us from schism, as to speak all the same thing, according to the Apostle.

The experience of former and latter times hath taught us, when the Liturgy was duly observed, we lived in peace; since that was laid aside, there hath been as many modes and fashions of public worship as fancies. We have had continual dissention, which variety of services must needs produce; whilst every one naturally desires and endeavours, not only to maintain, but to prefer his own way before all others; whence we conceive there is no such way for the preservation of peace, as for all to return to the strict use and practice of the form. And the best expedients to unite us all to that again, and so to peace, are, besides our prayers to the God of peace to make us all of one mind in an house, to labour to get *true humility*, which would make us think our guides wiser and fitter to order us than we ourselves, and *Christian charity*, which would teach us to think no evil of our superiors, but to judge them rather careful guides and fathers to us; which being obtained, nothing can be imagined justly to hinder us from a ready compliance to this method of service appointed by them, and so live in unity."—*Answer of the Bishops and Priests, assembled in* 1661 *by Royal Commission, to consider the Puritanical Objections to the Liturgy.*

To the Reverend CECIL WRAY, M.A.,

Incumbent of St. Martin's Church, Liverpool.

Reverend Sir,

We the Members of the Congregation of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, being anxious to possess a permanent record of the Sermon, on the Rubrics and Ritual of the Church, which you preached on the morning of the third Sunday in Advent, beg respectfully to request that you will do us and others the service of publishing it.

We are of opinion, that, at the present juncture, when, in various parishes, Christ's faithful Ministers are suffering obstruction in their orderly celebration of the Church's services, from factious clamour and selfish prejudice, an extensive circulation of sound and sober views on the duty of Congregations towards their Pastors and the Prayer Book, would be calculated to effect much good.

We are also glad to have the opportunity of bearing witness that there are not wanting many among the laity who have been taught to venerate the ancient things of the Church of England, and who consider her Ritual, as contained in the Book of Common Prayer, to be a providential protest against the Ultra-Protestant principles of the present day.

[*Forty-eight Signatures.*]

The Feast of St. Thomas, 1841.

To the CONGREGATION of ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH.

My dear Brethren,

You are quite welcome to the Sermon which I preached to you on the third Sunday in Advent, and I have to thank you for the considerate offer to defray the expense of its publication, and to give any proceeds that may arise from it to our school fund.

Perhaps the circumstances of the times may furnish an apology for circulating, beyond the limits of our congregation, a sermon which otherwise could have no claim to attention; and I have therefore expanded some passages, with a view to explain my meaning more fully.

It is a source of unspeakable consolation to me, that my endeavours to inculcate sound doctrine have produced the peaceable fruits of obedience; and that, while in other places an attempt to restore ritual conformity has been attended with unseemly disputes, and open rebellion against the clergy, my own efforts to lead you to worship God after the custom of our fathers have been cheered by your uniform and hearty concurrence.

You do well to venerate the "*ancient things*" of the Church of England. It is these that are the connecting link with the apostolic Church of old; it is through these that we, in some sort, sympathise with other branches of the Church universal.

The Ritual of the Prayer Book is, as you observe, a protest against the Ultra-Protestantism of the present day. It is, indeed, in singular contrast with the practice of most congregations; and it is no small national sin and scandal, that the clergy and laity are suffered to violate its requirements with impunity. Let us thank God that we are still, at least, permitted to obey the Prayer Book, and are not compelled to look elsewhere for the "ancient things" of the Church.

I am,
Your affectionate Pastor,
CECIL WRAY.

St. Martin's, Christmas, 1844.

SERMON.

THE PEOPLE'S DUTY TO THE CLERGY IN THEIR AIM AT RITUAL CONFORMITY.

1 Cor. iv. 1.

"*Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful: but with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.*"

The present day is remarkable for the excited state of the public mind, upon questions of theological and ritual controversy. A few years ago, the world was thoroughly wrapped up in its ordinary pursuits, and the Church, with its divinely authorised ministry, and deep mysteries, rarely found a place in ordinary conversation. Even the clergy seem to have been strangely remiss in giving definite instruction to their people upon these topics. But now, not the clergy only, but the whole body of the people, appear thoroughly aroused to the consideration of the Church, its doctrines, discipline, rites and ceremonies.

This excessive wakefulness, and unusual activity, is, perhaps, the natural result of the previous slumber. Indeed, the English Church may very well be compared to a person waking out of a deep sleep,

and the resemblance is observable in the confused and half-collected state of mind that its members betray in reference to their own true position, nay, to the very existence of the Church as a Divine Institution.

The clergy are undecided, the laity are presumptuous, and both seem alike to have forgotten their duty to their Holy Mother. The consequence is, that, instead of harmony, order, and good will, in places and on subjects where one would most expect to find the peaceable fruits of the gospel, there we are disturbed by divisions, rash judgments, and even open rebellion.

These, at all times serious offences, are doubly sinful among the assembly of saints. I conceive, therefore, that a few remarks upon the relative duties of pastors and people, in reference to existing disputes, will not be out of place on this Sunday in Advent, when we are, as it were, by the appointed services of the Church, led to consider our mutual responsibilities.

In the first place, it may be advisable to explain clearly the passage before us, and afterwards to draw from it such practical inferences as are suitable to the present times and circumstances of the Church.

In the previous chapter, the apostle had been exhorting the Corinthian converts not to "glory in men," not to boast of being the followers of particular teachers, and so divide themselves into parties; but that they should rather consider the dignity and importance of the Christian faith itself, in which all the efforts and aims of the several teachers centered: and that they should understand that "all things are theirs;" that the Apostles themselves, and all other things, are instrumental in the hands of God, and working together for their good. Thus would Saint Paul lead the Corinthians away from individual preachers to Christ himself; he would quench all

spirit of rivalry and partisanship, in the conviction that they were all united in one body, the temple of God.

He then proceeds, in the words of our text, to declare that though, in one sense, the apostles, and others engaged in the same holy work, might be considered the property, the ministers, or servants of their people, since their whole lives are devoted to their service, in imitation of Him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; yet, in another and higher sense, they were to be regarded as the "*ministers of Christ*, and stewards of the mysteries of God." The apostle's meaning is — though we are subservient to your uses, and appointed so to be, yet it becomes you to look on us, though not as masters of your faith, yet as ministers *of Christ;* and that in the most honourable office in his family, that of *steward* or *ruler* of the house, to whom, among other things, it belongs to dispense to every man his proportion of food: and so it is our part to dispense the gospel to you, in that measure, and by those degrees, that we see fit, according to the Lord's will. "Moreover, it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful," in discharging the trust committed to him. But in this, continues the Apostle, I am not to be judged *by you*, I am not amenable to human judgment, nay I do not pretend to judge myself; for though I am not conscious to myself of any unfaithfulness in the execution of my apostolical office, I am not therefore necessarily guiltless, "but he that judgeth me is the Lord," who alone searcheth the heart, and judgeth righteously, and from whose judgment there is no appeal. "Therefore judge nothing before the time." Be not too forward, that is, of your censures of me, but leave it to God, who will doubtless bring to light the real disturbers of our peace, and the dark purposes of those who

secretly foment divisions; and then, as they who deserve shall have blame, so every man that hath done well shall have praise of God, and be rewarded.

Such is the import of this passage of holy writ, which will be most opportunely read in the ears of the people of this nation, at a time when they very much need the counsel it conveys; for never, surely, since the days of the Puritans, was there a more bitter and lawless spirit displayed against those in authority in the Church; never did pride and ignorance inveigh so fiercely against the time-honoured practices prescribed by our apostolical ritual; never was the so-called religious press engaged in so unholy a crusade against Church discipline, and so perseveringly bent upon "turning religion into rebellion, and faith into faction."

Let us briefly glance at the occasion of the prevailing disputes. A large body of zealous clergymen, shocked at the ignorance which prevails on the subject of the Church as a divine institution, the want of uniformity in our religious services, the shameful irreverence exhibited in God's house, and the consequent increase of dissent; mindful, at the same time, that they have solemnly vowed before God, at their ordination, that they will "give faithful diligence so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the dicipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, *and as this Church and realm hath received the same*" from apostolic times; and that they are also pledged to "*teach the people committed to their care and charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same;*"—(for these are the very terms of our ordination vow)—mindful of these solemn promises, a large body of the clergy have for some time been endeavouring to discharge their duty in fulfilling them. They have endeavoured, by

obeying the rubrical directions in the Prayer Book, in the place of following their own fancies, or the fluctuating practice of the day, to restore the Liturgy to its proper meaning and dignity, and to give scope for the expression of that Catholic spirit of which it is full.

In adopting this very simple and consistent course of action, they have raised a storm which, to a superficial observer of events, is altogether unaccountable. The whole religious world is up in arms, and it is pronounced intolerable that any one should presume to be zealous about what the wisdom of modern times has decided to be non-essential. But this is not the first time, in the history of the Church, that there have been bitter contentions about matters reckoned indifferent. As with contending armies, the whole tide of battle often gathers round some unimportant position, from which it is sought to dislodge the enemy, and the final possession of which decides the engagement, so rubrics and surplices have often been made the battle-ground of the Church's disputes. Many a time, since the Reformation, have the representatives of opposite principles been marshalled under such banners as these; and, in every such contest, the surplice was denounced by the enemies of the Church as a rag of Popery, prejudicial to the propagation of evangelical truth.

What, then, is the deep-rooted cause of these religious contentions? and, how comes it to pass, that those persons who affect to consider the externals of religion of little importance, interfere so violently with others, who conscientiously regard outward forms with deeper reverence? The reason is this: With the Reformation there was introduced into the Church a *restless spirit of innovation*, which was never satisfied with what had been done,

but desired to root out all that was Catholic and Apostolic from our Liturgy, and to bring it into accordance with the reformed worship of the continent, or to that which has unhappily been established in Scotland.

A very slight knowledge of Church history, and of the changes which from time to time have been proposed and made in our Book of Common Prayer, will suffice to satisfy any man capable of conviction, that this Reformation leaven, which has at different periods raised up the various denominations of Puritans, Presbyterians, Independents, and Nonconformists, is still in these latter days working its mischief, and is as utterly opposed as ever to the fundamental principles of the Church of England.

Our Reformers ever maintained, that *no new Church* was being set up, but that their aim was to purify the *old Church* from corruptions, and to restore it to primitive simplicity. Therefore the ancient succession of bishops was carefully retained, and those creeds and liturgies which had been accepted by the universal Church were made the basis of our faith and worship. Scripture, interpreted by primitive tradition, was considered the rule of sound doctrine. Fasts and festivals, and many rites and ceremonies of catholic usage, were ordered to be observed, and the ministering vestments of the clergy, and ornaments of the Church, were expressly retained, according to ancient custom. The public offering of alms upon God's altar, by the priest, was enjoined as an integral portion of Divine worship, and the whole ritual was arranged upon a catholic model, and pains taken to ensure strict uniformity of celebration.

These, if she has any, mark the distinctive principles of the Church of England. They distinguish us from Rome on the one hand, and from the

Churches of the continental Reformation on the other. In theory, at least, if not in practice, we hold a middle position, between Popery and the Ultra-Protestant school of Geneva; and it is this, doubtless, which has providentially preserved us from the fearful fall into the Socinian heresy which has been the fate, and the judicial punishment, of many of the continental Churches. Rejecting the creeds of antiquity, and presuming upon their individual interpretation of the Bible, they have shamefully abandoned "the faith once delivered to the saints," and have fallen victims to their own presumption, "God having sent them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

Now the Puritanical, Independent, and other kindred schools, are all importations from Geneva, and their doctrines and discipline are tinctured with the traditions of Calvin. Whether in the Church's pale, or out of it, they cannot but cordially dislike the Church's doctrine, as far as it is *Catholic*. The Church *has* its accurate definitions of faith, and its forms of sound words. But these sadly shackle and tie down the independence of private judgment. The Church has its forms and ceremonies, (few indeed,) but it *has* forms; it has its surpliced priests, its solemn offertory of alms and elements, its cross in baptism, its bowing of the head at the Holy Name, but obedience to these requirements is gall and wormwood to the Independent and the Puritan. To do a thing, and that, too, an indifferent thing, because they are required to do it, is, in the opinion of such men, most humiliating. Obedience to authority is no part of their religion. To believe a doctrine because it has been universally believed by the holy Catholic Church, is not agreeable with their notions of Christian liberty. They stand as isolated individuals, rather than as united members of a society "keeping whole

and undefiled the Catholic faith." When, therefore, persons of this character of mind are members of the Church, they are, as it were, bound down with galling chains; and, as a fish struck with a hook, or inclosed in a net, darts away from time to time, and as often is suddenly checked, and brought back again as he touches the limits of his confinement, so does the unruly speculator in divine mysteries chafe and fret himself against the strong bulwarks of the Church, and impotently kick against the pricks of authorized scriptural interpretation. Here, then, we perceive the reason for the clamorous opposition which is offered to a revival of those forms and ceremonies which a culpable carelessness has suffered to fall into neglect; and to a restoration of those catholic usages which distinguish us from the different schismatical bodies which have no pretensions to apostolic descent. The truth is, being Dissenters at heart, and accustomed to fraternise with Dissenters, they are dissatisfied with the Prayer Book and its requirements, many of which they scruple not to evade as far as they dare. Nothing, therefore, is more acceptable to them than the indifference which has hitherto prevailed upon these matters; nothing more to be dreaded by them than that the Church should assert its truedignity, and the people be made to understand their claims and privileges as members of a branch of the Church Catholic.

Now let us consider for a moment the character of these charges, and how the natural answer to them recoils upon those who prefer them. We object, say they, to the surplice in the pulpit, the restoration of the offertory, and Church militant prayer, and other practices:—1st, Because they have fallen into disuse, and their revival is calculated to disturb and alarm the people, 2ndly. Their introduction is connected with a party whose tendency is

towards Rome. 3rdly. They are insignificant forms and puerile trifles not worth contending for. 4thly. The clergy have no right to make alterations in the ordering of divine service, nor the bishops to sanction them, without the permission of the people.

Now 1st. As to 'these observances having fallen into disuse, and their revival being cause of alarm,' it may be remarked that the said forms and ceremonies are *decent and proper,* otherwise they would not have been expressly ordered by the Church. If they have in a great measure fallen into disuse is our fault and reproach—that they are not obsolete is proved by the fact of their uninterrupted continuance in many of our older Churches; and that the Church does not intend them to become obsolete is sufficiently evident from the fact that every candidate for Holy Orders is pledged to observe them, and to teach his people to observe them likewise. And it is well remarked, in the Chapter on Ceremonies prefixed to the Book of Common Prayer, that "although the keeping or omitting of a ceremony, in itself considered, is but a small thing; yet the wilful and contemptuous transgression and breaking of a common order and discipline is no small offence before God. 'Let all things be done among you,' saith St. Paul, 'in a seemly and due order'." I conclude, therefore, that consistent members of the Church have no cause for alarm in the strict obedience which many of the clergy are now disposed to render to her Rubrics and Canons.

2ndly. As to 'these practices being introduced by persons suspected of Romanising;'—it may be asked, How does this charge condemn practices unquestionably authorised by our Reformed Church? If it can be proved that the persons alluded to are in the habit of introducing Romish additions into our ritual, then the objection would have some weight.

But the very reverse of this is the case. These men, more than any others, are endeavouring to carry out faithfully the prescribed order of the Church in Rubrics and Canons to the minutest particular; neither adding thereto, nor diminishing therefrom. And it may be safely asserted that where a zeal for Catholicism not according to knowledge has seduced to Popery ten out of the 20,000 clergy who minister in this land, the spirit of Puritanism has occasioned the defection of at least a hundred to the ranks of Dissent. Of course, the best principles may be carried to excess. While, therefore, we mourn over those who have left our Zion for the Church of Rome, let us not forget that Puritanism has its vicious extreme as well as Catholicism, and that that extreme is Socinianism and Infidelity.

3rdly. But, again, we are told that these are 'insignificant forms, and puerile trifles not worth contending for.' To this it may be answered, that the more insignificant and unimportant these ceremonies are, the greater is the guilt of those who omit them, being, as they are, expressly enjoined by the Church. But they are *not* 'puerile trifles.' They are most significant emblems and tests of certain important doctrines, which, in every age since the Reformation, have been matters of contention between Catholic-minded Churchmen and Puritanical Nonconformists; and our opponents are very well aware of this, though it serves their end to persuade the ignorant multitude that we are sticklers for empty forms. Empty indeed they are in their eyes, and worse than empty, because they witness to sacramental doctrine, which they obstinately reject. But the Church has always steadily persevered in refusing to abolish these ceremonies, avowing her conviction of the "dangerous consequences" of such proposed alterations, viz., "AS SECRETLY STRIKING AT SOME

ESTABLISHED DOCTRINE, OR LAUDABLE PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, OR INDEED OF THE WHOLE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST."* Let it never be forgotten, that there is not one single point of objection brought forward in the present day, which has not been again and again urged in the life-struggles which the Church has maintained against the Puritans and Regicides of old, and their descendants.†

I have already remarked that the surplice has always been especially an object of attack, for no other reason, it would seem, than because it was regarded as a "holy garment,"‡ and seemed to invest the wearer with a sacerdotal character. And this doubtless is the true reason why there is an anxiety to thrust it at least out of the pulpit, and to substitute in its stead the Genevan black gown. But this unauthorized change of dress, since, by tending to give the preacher's ministrations a distinct importance, it affords a sort of licence for extemporaneous prayer, — separates the morning sermon from the Communion office of which it is a part,—and prevents the return of the priest, as directed, to the Lord's Table for the concluding prayers,—cannot be approved of by those who desire a conformity to the Prayer Book, and uniformity in public worship. So neither again dare we dispense with, as unimportant, the significant ceremonial of the Offertory,§ the "*reverent bringing*" of the Alms-dish by the Churchwardens to the priest, the "*humble presentation*" of it by him upon the Holy Table, and (should there be a

* Preface to the Book of Common Prayer.

† See note A. ‡ Note A. Sec. 5.

§ The reverential demeanour of our forefathers at the offertory is witnessed by the ancient practice at some of the Colleges in Oxford, of each member walking up separately to the alter-rails, and humbly presenting upon his knees his own offering in the Alms-dish. See also Note B.

Communion) the oblation of bread and wine *then*, and not before, to Almighty God, with that most solemn and comprehensive prayer that He would be pleased to accept our *alms and oblations;* a prayer, let me add, which contains so touching a memorial of our friends departed, that even were it not a point of conscience to use it in obedience to the Church, we could not find in our hearts to deprive you, Brethren, of its blessed consolations. Seeing, then, that these ceremonies are not trifling, but pregnant with Catholic truth, and that they are objected to on these very grounds, how can the Church yield one iota to her enemies without betraying her principles? How invaluable are these ceremonies as a means of restoring the Church to a sounder spirit! It is admitted that our people are at present but little aware of their meaning and importance. But should they in an evil hour be sacrificed to clamour, we shall have yielded up the strong-hold which our fathers have won for us, and have forfeited our fairest hope of returning to a better mind.

But, 4thly, it would appear from recent events, that the laity conceive that the clergy have no right to deviate from customary practice in divine service without their permission. It is humiliating to reflect that English Churchmen should so far forget their duty to those who are over them in the Lord, as to set themselves in open opposition to their own pastors, even in the house of God, upon matters which at least seemed to be required by the Church, and a compliance with which cannot possibly be reckoned sinful. But it is difficult to repress our feelings of honest indignation when we find these parties disgracing themselves by a refusal to abide by the Bishop's decision, after having submitted the question to his arbitration. Where such is the conduct of congregations to their proper pastors, can we be

surprised, that elsewhere the enemies of sacred peace and subordination and all that is holy should combine in heaping up abuse against those who are conscientiously walking in the same good old paths;—that the press should thunder forth its anathemas against the clergy;—presumptuously condemn the charges of the Bishops themselves, and incite the people to open acts of rebellion.

Whatever other opinion may be formed of this outcry, we may certainly conclude that it is most offensive to Almighty God. In the whole history of His providential dealings with mankind, no sin has been so severely punished as disobedience and rebellion against constituted authority. It may be the wisdom of the world to gain its end by clamour; but such is not the wisdom which cometh from above, "but is earthly, sensual, devilish."

"*Obey* them that have rule over you" (says St. Paul to the Hebrews, alluding to their spiritual pastors,) "and *submit yourselves;* for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you." Such is the answer which Holy Writ furnishes to those who conceive that they are justified in rebelling against the ministers of Christ. And the words of our text convey the same wholesome lesson. "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment.....Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come."

The whole passage implies that the Church is God's household; it is not a mere state establishment, deriving its authority from man, much less from the body of the people, but it is divinely con-

stituted, having an heaven-descended stewardship, fundamental laws universally binding, and rites and ceremonies of local obligation, as recognized by particular branches of the same great society. These laws and canons are binding upon both the clergy and people, and the former are intrusted with their administration. But it is no part of the people's duty to judge the ministers of Christ; they are to leave all to the judgment of the Great Day. This is to be the *general principle* of their conduct towards Christ's ministers. They are to be submissive, and obedient, and trustful; not interfering, captious, and censorious. They are not to be as spies upon his conduct, suspicious of his motives and intentions, and seeking to catch him in his talk. On the contrary, they are to be honest, friendly, and confiding, loving him as a father, and honouring him as God's messenger to them. If they act thus, God will bless them, as for love and honour rendered to himself. This is the general principle of their conduct. The clergy, however, may neglect the duties of their stewardship. They may refuse to "feed the flock of Christ," of which they have the oversight, according to the prescribed order of the Church. They may neglect to give to all their meat in due season. They may rob their people of their just rights by administering the offices and sacraments of the Church in an irregular manner. Should this be the case, the people have their remedy: and this is by an appeal to the Diocesan, through the Churchwardens, setting forth the particular rubric or canon which has been violated. It is as much the duty of the people to complain in such cases to the proper authorities, and in the proper way, as it is a violation of the duty they owe to their pastors to appeal to the public through the press, or in cases where there has been no infringement of the Church's rules.

"Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions * and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that others may fear to offend." † The Ecclesiastical Courts are constituted to take cognizance of these offences, and all persons, whether lay or cleric, who purposely break the ceremonies of the Church, are amenable to their jurisdiction. And from these Courts, again, an appeal lies to the Archbishop, to whom the Bishops take an oath of obedience. In this graduated scale of authority we have the best safeguard for uniformity of practice. There are three orders in the Christian ministry, and they are subordinate one to the other; the Deacon being subject to the Priest, and both these to the Bishop. Moreover, all,—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,—are bound to obey the canons and rules of the Church. Now it is essential to the well-being of the Church that each order and degree should maintain its rights, and not exceed them. The Bishop's power is not that of a despot, but he acts as *Chief Steward* over the whole diocese, as the Priests are stewards over particular parishes. As we have no power and authority over the people, except according to the doctrine and discipline of the Church, so has the Bishop no power and authority over the Priests, except so far as it is exerted

* There are some traditionary customs in our public worship, which, though not expressly enjoined in the Rubrics, are approved by common consent, and the practice of our older Churches, such as the alternate reading or chanting of the Psalms, turning to the East at the Creeds, standing up, and singing a 'Gloria' before the Gospel, &c. These are indifferent matters, in the ordering of which obedience is due from the people to the minister of the sanctuary, who at the same time ought to exercise a sound discretion in their regulation.

† Art. xxxiv.

in accordance with the same discipline. We owe *canonical* obedience, but *no* obedience should we be required to transgress the Canons and Rubrics. We must venerate our Holy Mother above all. All the Bishops together cannot make the slightest alteration in a single Rubric of the Prayer Book. This can only be done in convocation, where the Priests have a right to be represented, and have a voice in all the deliberations. But though a Bishop has not power to alter a Rubric, it is his proper office to *interpret* them where they are doubtful; but he has no authority to do more than this; he has no right to recommend or sanction their transgression.

Bearing these observations in mind, my brethren, and duly weighing the decided language of the text, you will be prepared how to act, should you be solicited by the two or three rebellious spirits which are to be found in every community to combine in resisting what are called "novelties," in the celebration of Divine worship.

"Accounting of us as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God," you will always carefully distinguish between the sacred *office*, and the *individual* characters of those who are providentially set over you; and whether you regard them in the light of God's Priests, or as Ministers of the Sanctuary, or as Pastors of the Flock, or as Preachers of the Word, you will be careful not to allow any want of judgment, or indiscretion on their part, to prevent your reaping the full benefit of their ministrations As they are your spiritual fathers, who claim your love, respect, and submission, you will perceive how inconsistent with these duties is that distrustful and suspicious temper with which some would have you regard them; bidding you keep a sharp watch over their doctrine, as if you were the

fittest judges of the soundness of your Instructors' instructions, and as if this captiousness was likely to qualify you for becoming humble hearers or devout worshippers.* Should any changes be made in the ordering of public worship, even without due explanation, you will at first feel disposed to acquiesce quietly in such arrangements as your spiritual guides deem conducive to its decent celebration: nor, should you be unable to perceive how these changes are in accordance with the Ritual of the Church, will you think of opposition to your pastors, until having sought in private that information which they are always ready to afford, you have failed to receive the satisfaction you require.

Should you, however, find upon examination that these strange usages are enjoined in the Book of Common Prayer, in proportion to the love you bear to the Holy Mother at whose breasts you have been nourished, you will thank the Church's minister for making you better acquainted with her principles and customs. In proportion as you are good Catholics; *i. e.* delight in the reflection that you not only are members of a particular Church, but, through her, members of the Universal Church, you will hail the restoration of apostolic practices, as in some sort admitting to a fellowship with the saints of old. Remembering, too, that the clergy are solemnly pledged to maintain the Church's discipline, and obey her Canons, you will perceive at once the unreasonableness of urging them to do violence to their consciences by submitting to your own private prejudices, instead of the Church's rule. And you will perceive, also, how vain in such a matter must be an appealto the Bishop, who himself lies under the same obligation to obey the Church as the parochial clergy, and who has not the power, even had he the

* See Note A.

inclination, to give any one a dispensation to disobey her requirements.

Such are some of the considerations which would dispose religious and well-disposed members of a congregation to a cheerful and dutiful submission to the ministers of Christ. Very different, of course, would be the conduct of those whose attachment was merely to the *individual preacher*, and not to the Church. Very different, too, would be the conduct of those who, like "Diotrephes of old, love to have the pre-eminence," and, in the true spirit of dissent, delight to shew their own importance, and *their* misnister's dependence upon them. Too truly do such persons realize the character of those scoffers whom the Apostle designates as "despising government, presumptuous, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities, promising men liberty, while themselves are the servants of corruption." How utterly the most patient forbearance and the most laboured explanation of the Church's ritual would be thrown away upon such persons, is evident from late instances of their presumptuous rejection not only of their own Pastor's judgment, but also of the arbitration of their Diocesan, as soon as it is found that he must decide against them. What consideration, but that of the heathen and the publican, can they deserve, who thus openly refuse to "hear the Church," speaking through her Bishops, and return their courtesy with arrogance and threatening? Surely if it be a duty to be "gentle unto all men, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth," it is no less a duty that those who stir up open rebellion in the very house and presence of God, should be "rebuked with all authority, and that before all," that others also may "fear," and not "perish with them in the gainsaying *of Core.*"

But you, brethren, have not so learned Christ. Be assured you will never exalt yourselves, by degrading your pastors from the dignity with which God has invested them. "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." And think you that they will rise in your estimation, by yielding to intimidation and betraying their trust? Rather, in proportion as they are firm and consistent, will you honour and obey them as God's representatives to you. And you will find the blessedness of so doing; you will experience a real happiness, in cheerfully submitting to all their reasonable suggestions; and nothing should be deemed unreasonable, which is not at variance with the Church's instructions and alien to her spirit. And such things the faithful steward will not require at your hands. There must, indeed, occasionally be arrangements made, and orders given, for the decent celebration of Divine worship, which, though expressly designed to carry out the intention of the Church, cannot actually be found among the Rubrics. These regulations, though they are matters of indifference before they are enjoined by the presiding Minister, are no longer so after he has requested their uniform observance. A dogged obstinacy in such matters would, even in worldly affairs, betray a littleness of spirit; but, in the house and presence of God, it is a far more serious offence. May God preserve you all, my beloved brethren, from the misery of a contentious and rebellious temper, and teach you to be willing and glad to "obey those who have rule over you," in the minutest particular; remembering that, where it is not sinful to obey, it must be sinful to disobey.

NOTE A., Page 15.

Modern violations of the Ritual shewn to be identical with the Puritanical objections of old, by a few extracts from the Savoy Conference in 1661. The objectors were dissatisfied Clergymen, who wished the Prayer Book to be altered to suit their private fancies. The Bishops and Priests who answered them were appointed by Royal Commission, under Charles II., to consider their grievances.

1. EXTEMPORE PRAYER.

Complaint of the Puritans at being denied the "gift of prayer" in public worship.—"It is a matter of great trouble to us that you would deny us and all ministers the liberty of using any other prayers besides the Liturgy."

Answer of the Bishops and Priests.—"The gift, or rather, the spirit of prayer consists in the inward graces of the Spirit, not in extempore expressions, which any man of natural parts, and having a voluble tongue, and audacity, may attain unto." "And we heartily desire that great care may be taken to suppress those private conceptions of prayers both before and after Sermons, lest private opinions be made the matter of prayer in public, as hath and will be, if private persons take liberty to make public prayers."

2. IRREGULAR ADMINISTRATION OF THE EUCHARIST.

Objection of the Puritans.—"We desire that at the distribution of the bread and wine to the communicants, the Minister be *not required* to deliver the bread and wine into every particular communicant's hand, and repeat the words to each one in the singular number."

Answer of the Bishops and Priests.—"It is most requisite that the minister delivers the bread and wine into every particular communicant's hand, for so much as it is the propriety of the Sacraments to make *particular obsignation to each believer*, and it is our visible profession that by the grace of God Christ tasted death for every man."

Notwithstanding this explicit statement of the Church's intention, and the express order of Canon xxi., that "The minister *shall deliver both the bread and the wine to every communicant severally*," there is no scruple nowadays to adopt the puritanical mode of administration, and to deprive the communicant of the particular application of sacramental grace.

3. APOCRYPHAL LESSONS.

The Puritans objected to the Apocryphal Lessons as Popish, and desired that they should be expunged from the Calendar.

The Bishops answered.—"As you would have no Saints'-days observed by the Church, so no Apocryphal Chapter read in the Church, but upon such a reason as would exclude all *Sermons* as well as Apocrypha, viz., because the Holy Scriptures contain

in them all things necessary either in doctrine to be believed, or in duty to be practised. If so, why so many unnecessary sermons? Why any more but reading of Scriptures? If, notwithstanding their sufficiency, sermons be necessary, there is no reason why these Apocryphal Chapters should not be as useful, most of them containing excellent discourses and rules of morality, so that it is heartily to be wished that sermons were as good."

4. POSITION OF THE MINISTER IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

The Puritanical Clergy were fond of praying with their faces towards the people, with their backs to the Holy Table.

The Bishops observed upon this, that "the minister's turning to the people is not most convenient throughout the whole ministration; when he speaks to them in Lessons, Absolutions, and Benedictions, it is convenient that he turn *to them;* when he speaks *for them to God*, it is fit that they should all turn another way, as the Ancient Church ever did."

5. THE SURPLICE.

The Puritans declared that "they had scruples about the Surplice, because, as they think, it is made a *holy vestment*, and so part of external worship, as Aaron's vestments were."

NOTE B.

CEREMONIAL OF THE OFFERTORY.

In the Coronation Office, "The king and queen go to the steps of the altar, &c. Then the king, *kneeling as before*, makes his second oblation, offering a mark weight of gold." At St. George's Chapel in Windsor, the king and knights of the garter make their offerings *kneeling*, so do the dean and clergy at Canterbury, *each separately, and kneeling.*

See Christian Remembrancer, Jan. 1843.

It has been argued that the weekly offertory has been superseded by the poor laws. A sufficient answer to this objection is the fact that the *poor laws were established in Queen Elizabeth's reign*, whereas the Rubrics in our Prayer Book, which enjoin the Offertory as a regular portion of Divine Service, received the authority of Convocation more than a *hundred years subsequently.*

W. GRAPEL, CHURCH-STREET.